



8-2020

“One Day Dictated So Much”: A Qualitative Study on the Long-Term Effects of Behavioral Management Charts

Aya E. Barnes

University of Tennessee, xsj151@vols.utk.edu

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Aya E. Barnes entitled ""One Day Dictated So Much": A Qualitative Study on the Long-Term Effects of Behavioral Management Charts." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Sociology.

Stephanie Bohon, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Shaneda Destine, Asafa Jalata, Victor Ray

Accepted for the Council:

Dixie L. Thompson

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

**“ONE DAY DICTATED SO MUCH”: A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON THE LONG-
TERM EFFECTS OF BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT CHARTS**

A Thesis Presented for the
Master of Arts
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Aya E. Barnes

August 2020

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DEDICATION

To Mr. Vic,

who is not here with us today to see the end result of this project,
but who has always encouraged, motivated, and bragged about
the student I've always been and the scholar I am today.

Yours truly,

Muffin

To my family and friends,
whose support is unquestioned,
always on time,
and very much appreciated.

To my former classmates,
at Woodmore Elementary, Dalewood Middle,
and Brained High School of Chattanooga, TN
who unknowingly inspired this project.
You are seen, you are heard, and you are valued.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I cannot express enough thanks to my committee for their continued support and encouragement: Dr. Stephanie Bohon, my committee chair; Dr. Shaneda Destine; Dr. Asafa Jalata; and Dr. Victor Ray. I offer my sincere appreciation for the learning opportunities provided by my committee.

My completion of this project could not have been accomplished without the support of my family, Sonia, Athnel, Ijahman, Una, Ian, and Bryce; my mentors, Enkeshi and Louise; my classmate, Bryan; Devante and the students of New Intuitive Development; my Little, Trayana; the “POC Sociology” group; #BlackAcademicTwitter; artists who make music that I will forever use as a coping mechanism; and all those who allowed me to interview them and hear their stories.

Finally, to myself, for persisting, for proving myself right, and for staying true to my research and interests. While experiencing a global pandemic and constant racial trauma, with the completion of this project I find a bit of joy and peace.

#BlackLivesMatter #ProtectBlackWomen

ABSTRACT

School discipline is a topic that has been heavily studied across disciplines. Suspensions, expulsions, and arrests have long been at the center of this research, with a particular focus on racial disparities. Less severe, punitive systems like Behavioral Management Charts (BMCs) are often left out of these conversations and arguments. Therefore, it is appropriate to ask and evaluate how these more minor systems genuinely affect students while serving their purpose of “preventing disruptive behaviors.” This thesis explores how the use of BMCs impacts college students at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Asking how, if at all, they have contributed to their change in behavior over time. This thesis builds on previous research on positive behavior support strategies in the classroom by examining both their long-term effects and their implications of producing “positive” outcomes.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Social scientists (e.g., Lannie and McCurdy 2007) argue that classroom management and behavior interventions are necessary to prevent disruptive behavior and are effective. Other scholars (e.g., Boaler 2003; Kozol 2005; Brooks, Schiraldi, & Zeidenberg 1999, Skiba et al. 2002; Hirschfield 2008) have noted that school disciplinary regimes—regimes that are more apparent in schools that educate non-White students than in mostly white schools—are harmful to the education of non-White students and “by extension, whole families, cultures, races, teachers, or schools” (Knoester & Au 2017:7). Disciplinary regimes are systems or planned ways of training students expected to produce a specific character or pattern of behavior (Thomson and Pennacchia 2016). Considering that these positions are not necessarily mutually exclusive, it is appropriate to ask and evaluate how these systems genuinely affect students while serving their purpose of “preventing disruptive behaviors.”

Most of the literature on the harms of school disciplinary regimes focus on harsh punishments such as suspension, expulsion, and even arrest (Townsend 2000; Theriot 2009; Giroux 2003). In my thesis, I explore less overt punitive actions. Specifically, I examine how the use of behavioral management charts (BMCs) impacts Black students asking how, if at all, they have contributed to their change in behavior over time.

Classroom BMCs are predominantly used in elementary schools, and serve as visuals that teachers use to publicly track students’ behavior. These systems serve as a measurement technique to judge if the student’s behavior meets the classroom expectations for discipline. Every day students have the chance to “start over” and correct the previous days’ behavior. BMCs are typically color-coded charts that use three or more colors, each representing how good

or bad the student's behavior has been for the day. Green, yellow, and red are the most common colors used. Green signifies good or exceptional behavior, yellow signifies a warning for the student. A student on yellow most likely have misbehaved or disobeyed a single classroom rule, but being on yellow usually does not warrant a demerit. Red signifies that the student has misbehaved more than once and usually calls for demerits.

Exclusionary Discipline

K-12 strict disciplinary regimes and practices have been discussed in the literature of education for decades. Most of the literature focuses on exclusionary discipline strategies such as out of school suspension and expulsions (Townsend 2000), the use of Student Resource Officers (SROs), and police contact (Theriot 2009), and is typically connected to the school to prison pipeline (Foucault 1977; Bowles and Gintis 1976; Staples 2013; Giroux 2003; Morris 2016). From a criminology standpoint, strict discipline and control regimes used in schools are preparing students for prison (Giroux 2003), an industrial workplace (Foucault 1977), or a combination of the two (Kupchik and Monahan 2006). Critical race scholars argue that exclusionary discipline strategies disproportionately target African-American students, other minorities, and low-income students at inner-city schools (Ladson-Billings 2009; Skiba et al. 2002; Gordon, Piana, & Keleher 2000; Annamma, Connor, & Ferri 2013).

Exclusionary discipline strategies are those that remove students from their classroom either temporarily or permanently (Skiba et al. 2002). These discipline strategies are a two-step process. First, the student receives an office discipline referral where they are immediately removed from the classroom and sent to the principal's office. Then, the principal decides if the student should be suspended, expelled, or dealt with by law enforcement. All three choices result in the student being removed from their classroom and school for a short-or long-term or

indefinitely. This removal from the classroom can hinder academic growth and success and criminalizes the student (Townsend 2000). When students are unable to attend class, they miss out on lesson plans and fall behind which then causes them to fail class assignments and tests. This not only lowers their overall class grades but hinders the student from moving forward to the next subject or even classroom; African-American students are the most affected (Townsend 2000). The denial of access to learning opportunities creates a domino effect; students fall behind in class, may have to enroll in remedial classes, and are at greater risk for contact with the legal system or law enforcement (ibid).

Aside from hindering academic success, exclusionary discipline practices criminalize students (Wacquant 2001). Many of the zero tolerance policies and strict rule violations mimic the way judges sentence individuals in court (Hirschfield 2008). By endorsing and rationalizing criminal justice practices, deterrence and incapacitation, schools contribute to the criminalization of their students.

Non-Exclusionary Discipline

As so much of the literature focuses on exclusionary discipline practices—in most cases arguing against their use—there is limited literature on non-exclusionary discipline strategies. The available literature on non-exclusionary discipline strategies focuses on the use of “positive” behavior support strategies. Positive behavior support strategies teach and reward positive behavioral expectations and are found to be effective in reducing “bad” behavior and improving classroom climate (Mitchell and Bradshaw 2013). One study on the positive effects of non-exclusionary disciplinary regimes examined one classroom where a teacher had been described as having poor classroom management. In that classroom, the researchers implemented the Good Behavior Game (GBG), a management system used to help students develop discipline and order

in the classroom. The game teaches students how to sit still, pay attention, and finish their work. The study concluded that implementing the GBG increased student on-task behavior and decreased disruptive behavior. The GBG requires that students act in ways often expected in the classroom (like raising their hands and waiting for permission before speaking), but these expectations are expressed as part of the game, rather than classroom conduct rules.

The push for positive behavior support strategies is common (Mitchell and Bradshaw 2013; Arbuckle & Little 2004; Sugai et al. 1999). Daily Behavior Report Cards (DBRCs) is another strategy teachers associate with positive behavior support strategies. DBRCs rate a specified behavior daily, and the information is shared with someone other than the rater (teacher) such as a parent or guardian (Chafouleas, Riley-Tillman, & McDougal 2002). Many scholars argue that DBRCs are useful in encouraging positive student behavior (Pelham 1993; Turco & Elliot 1986, Blechman et al. 1981; Dougherty & Dougherty 1977; Chafouleas et al. 2002). One study observed 37 Maryland public elementary schools with a strong focus on school-wide positive behavior interventions. The researchers documented how using positive behavior strategies was positively associated with discipline and order in the classroom (Mitchell and Bradshaw 2013). Overall, many scholars support the idea of positive behavior support strategies as they believe these efforts will result in well-managed classrooms where students behave better and, presumably (but not measured), learn more (Lewis 2001; Sugai and Horner 2006; Sugai, Lewis-Palmer, & Hagan-Burke 2000; Sugai, Horner, & Gresham 2002). Positive behavior support strategies are implemented as less severe discipline models to combat the need for exclusionary discipline models. BMCs tend to fall under the category of positive behavior support strategies, where teachers reward students for their positive behaviors and dish out

demerits for negative behaviors in an effort to prevent inappropriate behaviors and establish order in the classroom.

Although non-exclusionary behavior strategies are supported by many of the researchers studying these strategies, as far as I know, we have not studied the long-term impacts on students, especially the potential for racialized outcomes. The purpose of my thesis is to examine college students' expressed beliefs about how one type of positive behavior support strategy, BMCs, experienced in elementary has impacted them later in life. I also examine whether or not the effects are felt differently by students racialized as White or Black.

Racial Disparities with Discipline

Critical education scholars have documented how racism is institutionalized within the educational system (Bell 1979; Ladson-Billings 1995; 1998; Taylor 2000). White teachers typically do not recognize the white privilege paradigms that reinforces racist views in their classrooms, which factors into their decision making (Pane & Rocco 2012). While evaluating behavior in the classrooms, teachers punish African-American students more harshly because they are not familiar with their cultural backgrounds (Pane & Rocco 2012). This is why Black girls are considered combative and argumentative when they are speaking in loud tones or using hand gestures while communicating (Townsend 2000; Crenshaw, Ocen, and Nanda 2015). Judging student's behavior in the classroom while believing that their own culture and behavior is superior to their students frequently causes teachers to use exclusionary school discipline practices that disproportionately affect African-American students (Pane & Rocco 2012).

Additionally, scholars (Irvine 1990; DeCuir & Dixson 2004; Gregory & Mosley 2004) have shown that some behaviors are defined as disruptive when displayed by a Black student but not a White student. There is an expectation that Black students will misbehave more than other

students, and therefore schools discipline Black students more harshly (Gregory & Mosley 2004). Black children are viewed as less innocent and more grown-up but not necessarily mature, and because of these racist stereotypes, Black children are assumed to be more responsible for their actions than their White peers (Bernstein 2011).

These unequal systems of discipline negatively impact and criminalize Black students, commonly leading to criminal records or imprisonment (Hirschfield 2008; Civil Rights Project 2000). Black students continue to get the shorter end of the stick; teachers expect Black students to misbehave, they discipline Black students more often than other students, and Black students face harsher consequences for displaying the same behavior as other students (Pane & Rocco 2012).

Need for Study

Generally, stricter discipline models are implemented at schools that serve a large population of Black students (Irby 2014). These models are enforced by the teacher or the school's administration whenever a student breaks the rules, and infractions are frequently met with mandatory suspensions and expulsions often referred to as *zero tolerance rules*. Zero tolerance can be defined as "a disciplinary policy that is intended primarily as a method of sending a message that certain behaviors will not be tolerated, by punishing all offenses severely, no matter how minor" (Skiba and Knesting 2001:20). In 1989, several school districts in the United States adopted the zero tolerance policies which mandated expulsions for drugs, fighting, and gang-related activity (Skiba and Knesting 2001). In the following years, these zero tolerance policies began to include mandatory punishment for smoking, weapons, school disruption, threats, and swearing. Policing some behaviors is hard to argue against since one role of the school is ensuring the safety of all students. However, these zero tolerance policies have had

negative unintended consequences such as limiting learning, since students are immediately expelled and removed from their classroom and there is no room for discretion (Robbins 2008). These policies also contribute to the school to prison pipeline by connecting students with law enforcement and facilitating the creation of a “criminal” record (Skiba 2014).

Less severe discipline models and rules in classrooms such as “raise your hand and wait to be called on; keep hands, feet, and objects to self; remain in seat; follow directions the first time given” are also enforced and punished in a way similar to zero tolerance and strict discipline models (Lannie and McCurdy 2007:90). Instead of immediate expulsion or suspension, students are policed through positive incentives. With the use of behavioral management charts (BMCs), students are a part of a token economy where they receive rewards (candy, free time, etc.) at the end of a specific period of time (1 day, 1 week, etc.) for meeting the appropriate target behaviors of their classrooms usually assigned by each individual teacher (Kazdin 1977; Krach et al. 2016).

The effects of strict discipline models, both short-term and long-term, have been documented by numerous scholars. The implementation of school resource officers (SROs) in schools prepares students for prison (Parenti 2000; Hirschfield 2008). This process of criminalization is more prevalent and intense in schools that are heavily populated by disadvantaged Black students (Wacquant 2001; Hirschfield 2008; Fine et al. 2004). These strict discipline models produce harm that extends to the family, ruining family relations (Knoester & Au 2017). We do not know if any of this can be also true for less strict discipline models, like BMCs or if there are other unintended consequences. After constantly being suspended, scholars have noted that it encourages students to drop out of school, which usually leads to gang violence, prison, death, or a combination of them all (Skiba and Knesting 2001). What happens

to the students who are in classrooms where BMCs are used, modifying their actions and behaviors for the perceived rewards and or punishments, and are the outcomes racialized?

To my knowledge, there have not been any studies that examine the influence of BMCs among adult college students who were subject to the use of these charts in their childhood. However, studying the long-term effects of BMCs is potentially important. College students are being prepared for white collar jobs instead of working class, blue collar jobs (Hurst 2012). White collar jobs typically require less manual labor and more decision-making and leadership skills. Yet BMCs put a priority on following rules and being obedient, so the use of BMCs may make students less prepared for the kind of creativity and critical thinking necessary to complete college and compete for white-collar careers (c.f. Lareau 2003).

One early study (Atkeson and Forehand 1979) examined the use of BMC data as a part of a parent-teacher communication plan and found that parents implement home-based punishments and rewards according to their child's displayed behavior in the classroom. The authors argued that because of the parent-teacher communication plan, students tend to improve their behavior at school. Although this study is dated, it suggests that BMCs follow students into the home. However, the authors did not specify the race of the teachers or students while pushing for more home-based reinforcement strategies and did not examine the impact of BMCs on college student's behavior.

In my thesis, I am particularly interested in exploring how the use of BMCs impacts Black students asking how, if at all, these charts have contributed to students' changes in behavior over time. Examining any reported changes in behavior over time, especially while in college, will inform my study. In my findings, I show that college students who were subject to BMCs are accustomed to having their behavior managed and controlled and sometimes find it

hard to navigate college since they now have more autonomy. If those students are struggling with the additional autonomy of college, this might also affect their behavior after college within their white-collar jobs.

I examine these behavior systems as disciplinary regimes that potentially produce racialized outcomes for Black students. Specifically, I ask how do BMCs used in elementary school affect perceptions of student's agency (actions/behavior) in college? Do these systems influence college student's perception of their ability to be effective communicators outside of the classroom? Do college students perceive that there were differences in behaviors for which Black and White students received demerits? Are there noticeable differences in how Black and White college students perceive the effects of these charts on their current actions?

CHAPTER TWO METHODS

Between October 2019 and March 2020, I conducted in-depth, open-ended, semi-structured interviews with seventeen current undergraduate students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. All of the participants in my study attended elementary schools where behavioral management charts (BMCs) were used in their classroom(s).

Ideally, I would have conducted more interviews, however, my fieldwork was prematurely interrupted by the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic which forced Institutional Review Boards across the country to halt all face-to-face data collection. At the time of this writing, it is still unsafe to conduct fieldwork. Technically, I could have conducted some interviews by phone or web interface, but with school closures and quarantines, recruiting more participants became nearly impossible.

Statement on Reflexivity

Maintaining reflexivity was important during my research approach. The reflexive lens of my research has allowed me to understand my own enterprise in the same manner that I have tried to understand the participants of my study (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw 2011).

My passion for learning was silenced in elementary school. As a young child, at a low-income urban public school in Chattanooga, TN, I was an earnest student. But my teachers often met my excitement by saying, “If you continue to shout out answers, your behavior stick will be moved down.” (Behavior sticks were ways of monitoring students’ daily deportment.) I could not understand why I was being punished for answering questions. These punishments at school also carried over to my home, when my mother would ask, “What color were you on today?” and

if it wasn't "blue" (the best color), then I was scolded at home, too. As a consequence, I tried to be "on blue" daily. I learned to keep my ideas and answers to myself.

As an undergraduate, I rarely participated in class, but as I began to take upper-division seminars in sociology, I learned that my professors expected me to participate. They encouraged me to provide creative and critical input. As a current second-year MA student in Sociology, I could not have gotten where I am today if I had continued to keep silent in my classes.

Beyond my personal experience, my extracurricular work exposes me to personal accounts of how educational "innovations" affect students' behavior. As a tutor of grades K-12 for predominantly Black students in East Knoxville, as a "big sister" with Big Brother/Big Sister of East TN to a 13-year-old Black girl, and as an aunt with nieces and nephews at low-income urban public schools, I often hear tales of unequal discipline. These stories include being sent to in-school suspension after explaining a concept to another student or being scolded after loudly celebrating a high test score. Of course, personal experience is no substitute for rigorous social scientific evidence, but my story provides the source of intellectual curiosity about school discipline.

My personal experience is why I have chosen to write my thesis on the effects of BMCs. The hard task of learning and unlearning classroom behavior led me to think about racial and gender disparities in school discipline and how the use of BMCs may shape student engagement and college success. Although my story is unique and singular, following the arguments of many critical race scholars, the narratives and stories of marginalized groups are important (Delgado 1989). "Our stories are our theories," and as a Black woman, my story is my theory--a theory that I was passionate to explore and examine (Brayboy & McKinley 2005:92).

Reflecting on my positionality, I believe that being a Black woman impacted the data collection process in different ways. One way is that it seemed easier to get honest responses from

most of my Black and non-White participants. Throughout our conversations, they would frequently say “you know what I mean” implying that as another Black person I must have shared similar lived experiences. On the other hand, it felt as if many of my White participants tried to maintain an impartial attitude in hopes of not offending me when asked about racial differences. When I asked one participant to describe the location and racial makeup of their school, she felt that it was necessary to first assure me that her school did not support racism, “Okay, there’s been articles [published] about my school that has said it’s racist, but it’s not like that whatsoever. I think that it’s trying to bring people more so together.” Another White participant said, “It’s a predominantly white school...[pause] but other students [of other races] could’ve came; there just weren’t any at the time.” Being a Black woman in the field affected the depth of the many conversations I had.

Not only have I maintained reflexivity during my research process while recruiting participants and writing field notes, but also while interviewing these participants. Several participants found the inclusion of my personal narrative to be helpful in their attempts to answer my many questions, and I took cautions not to be overly persuasive.

To explain how I used my own experiences to solicit the experiences of others, consider this example of what I shared when asking one participant to describe the layout of the BMC used in their classroom:

PI: I know at my school we had an adjective for each color and it was best blue, good green, okay orange...

Jackie: That makes it even worse.

PI: Yeah, it went down to pitiful purple.

Jackie: That's bad. I don't like that. Ours was not as complex.

Jackie's classroom only used three colors; green (good), yellow (okay), and red (bad). She shared that she strived to be the teacher's pet and therefore remained on green most days. By hearing me describe the standards used in the classrooms I experienced, the respondent had a point of comparison which allowed her to think about the complexity of the system she experienced.

When asking one participant what kind of behaviors caused a student to move down on the BMC, I shared:

PI: I'll speak for myself. Um, we always got in trouble for talking and so then I wouldn't talk at all and I wouldn't answer questions...

Krystion: We got in trouble for talking too, but I noticed I got in trouble a lot for defending myself, like someone will, like, bully me and I'll pick and choose whenever I want [to react].

Krystion usually found herself in the middle of her classroom BMC on S (satisfactory) or N (needs improvement), but never on E (excellent) or U (unsatisfactory).

These dialogues are representative of other conversations I had with participants, where sharing my narrative allowed them to 1) understand the initial question I asked, 2) get a sense of my background and experience with BMCs, and 3) provide an honest response, whether I reminded them of a similar situation in their classroom or not. Although researchers are often cautioned to remain neutral and not insert themselves into their research, sharing my own experiences acted as a prompt that allowed those being studied to more closely search for memories.

Characteristics of Research Participants

As I was conducting preliminary research, I noticed that students who were older than me (age 23 at the time of this writing) were unaware of BMCs and did not have or use them in their elementary classrooms. Initially, I wanted to observe elementary classrooms to see if and how BMCs were used today. Due to access limitations, I was not able to make those observations to see if and how BMCs are still being used in elementary classrooms. Therefore, I chose to specifically work with current undergraduates, noting that they are close to me in age. I assumed those students were aware of BMCs and they were used in their elementary classrooms just as they were used in mine. During recruitment, I noticed that my assessment was correct, as my participants affirmed their recognition of and experience with BMCs. Of the seventeen participants I ultimately interviewed, four were men and thirteen were women. Five participants were Black, ten participants were White, and two appeared to be neither Black nor White. Of the two, one appeared to be Latinx and the other person looked Southeast Asian (perhaps Indian) to me. All participants were current undergraduate students from freshmen to seniors. These participants attended elementary schools from various socioeconomic status (SES), ranging from lower class to upper class.

Table 1: Participant Characteristics

Pseudonym	Sex	Race/Ethnicity	Class Level	Type of School	SES	School State
Allie	F	White	Sophomore	Public	Low	Louisiana
Trohalis	F	Latinx/Hispanic	Sophomore	Public	Low-Middle	Colorado
Lyric	F	Black	Junior	Public	Low	Tennessee
Titus	M	Black	Freshman	Public	Low	Tennessee

Table 1 Continued

Krystion	F	Black	Sophomore	Private	Low	Tennessee
Kilexyus	F	Black	Senior	Public	Middle	Tennessee
Tyler	M	Black	Sophomore	Private	Low	Tennessee
Turner	M	Indian-American	Sophomore	Public	Middle	Tennessee
Caitlyn	F	White	Senior	Public	High	Tennessee
Crystal	F	White	Sophomore	Private	Upper-Middle	Tennessee
Austin	M	White	Junior	Private	High	Tennessee
Anna	F	White	Freshman	Private	Middle	Tennessee
Harper	F	White	Freshman	Public	Upper-Middle	Texas
Holly	F	White	Junior	Public	Low	Tennessee
Jackie	F	White	Junior	Public	Upper-Middle	New Jersey
AbbeyRae	F	White	Junior	Private	High-Middle	Tennessee
Liz	F	White	Sophomore	Public	Middle	Illinois

Table 1 summarizes select demographic characteristics of my research participants. Most of the characteristics listed are based on my own assessment, as none of my participants were asked to identify their gender, race and ethnicity, or class status. The characteristics came from my own visual assessment of the participants and from comments they made about themselves and their schools. All participants were asked to describe the location of the elementary school in which they attended. Every participant described the SES of their school in their own terms. I

assumed that student's SES was reflected in the types of schools they attended (i.e., poor, inner city schools would be attended by poor, inner city residents).

Analytic Strategy

I utilized an ethnographic approach using in-depth semi-structured interviews as a means of data collection in an attempt to hear the stories of those individuals who are and have been directly impacted by the phenomena of "lenient" school disciplinary regimes. This has allowed me to hear personal feelings and the logic surrounding the idea of monitoring and controlling student's behaviors. Unlike structured interviews, semi-structured interviews provide a space for the conversations to vary and change among participants. This method has also allowed flexibility in my qualitative study, whereas some questions were straightforward others were very open, permitting the conversation to take many directions so that I am able to better "find out the *Why* rather than the *How many* or *How much*" (Miles and Gilbert 2005:66).

I audio-recorded interviews, with the prior consent of participants. I fully transcribed each interview first using Temi, an audio to text automatic transcription service, then I personally went back and listened to each recording to ensure those transcriptions were consistent with, and accurately represent participants' comments. For all participants, I replaced any potentially identifying data, such as names of people or schools, with fictitious names in the transcripts in order to protect the privacy and confidentiality of those participants. In this thesis, I have tried to present all quotes from participants as they delivered their responses, including slang, African-American Vernacular English (AAVE), and profanity.

The analysis of my field notes and interview transcripts was based on the research strategy of analytic induction, which is a method used to identify any emerging patterns in my data by using thematic codes (Bowen 2005). This has allowed themes, categories, and patterns to

emerge from my data compared to imposing themes, categories, and patterns on the data initially (Patton 1980). I followed an iterative cycle of generating a hypothesis, interviewing participants, and reviewing my hypothesis after each interview to see if it was supported. When a hypothesis was not supported I rejected or revised the hypothesis and restarted the cycle.

I treated each participant's responses as factual. I accepted their answer, but then analyzed their responses through a critical lens and probed for contradictions. This critical approach was important, during the interview participants would deny that they were impacted by BMCs then later reveal that they were indeed impacted. Participants would note how something did not happen to them, but then said other things that make me think it did happen. When I asked one participant how they felt about the BMC being publicized in the classroom for everyone to see, they shared it was not a big deal then later shared that it was significant and something they did not appreciate.

Lyric: The chart was a good visual in my class. Seeing your progress throughout the day was helpful...I don't know, maybe it should have been private 'cause it would be embarrassing. To go up there and have to move your color in front of everyone wasn't a fun thing to do. I would feel silly.

Lyric shared that she was a good student who stayed on green most days, though there were a few times when she had to move down to yellow. In her classroom, their BMC was color coded with adjectives for each color; good green, yucky yellow, and rowdy red. Another participant said that BMCs are effective and necessary for elementary classrooms, then later contradicted herself on its effectiveness.

PI: Do you believe BMCs are effective, especially the one used in your classroom?

AbbeyRae: Yeah. Absolutely.

PI: Overall, how do you feel about them [BMCs]?

AbbeyRae: I feel like it's good and bad because it teaches them that if I do something right or well, then they get to have a little happy [reward] or something. But if it's something bad, then, like, they just put a bad sticker up and that's it. Like, they're not taught how to not do it or how to effectively change their behavior.

In AbbeyRae's classroom, their BMC was a pocket chart where the teacher would either place a green apple, for good behavior, a yellow apple, for mild behavior, or a red apple, for bad behavior in the student's pocket at the end of each day. AbbeyRae always received green apples, she shared that she cannot remember a time when she received a yellow or red apple.

In addition to my inductive cycle of analysis, I also ensured trustworthiness by following two of the six strategies for enhancing rigor: member checking and negative case analysis. I also intended to follow a third strategy for enhancing rigor, prolonged engagement, but my fieldwork was interrupted due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Padgett 2016). Although I was not necessarily in the field for a prolonged time, I did spend an extended amount of time in the research by reading extensively. Even during the fieldwork phase, I continued reading in hopes to connect data from the field with concepts in the literature. Member checking involves checking the accuracy of facts and observations from my participants (Bowen 2005). When necessary, I contacted participants to crosscheck the information they previously shared during our initial interview to be sure I captured their responses correctly in my analysis. Lastly, I used negative case analysis, which relates to my cycle of analysis, to use as verification. I reexamined every case to see if themes and categories were applicable to all other cases. Furthermore, I remained critical during

the fieldwork process and during my analysis. By critical I mean staying open-minded while examining various ideas and being careful while making judgments and reaching conclusions.

Access

I gained access to research participants through three primary mechanisms. First, I began by asking faculty and graduate instructors in Sociology classes at the University of Tennessee to make an announcement of my study and ask for participation. I used a solicitation email and infographic (see Figure 1) that I sent to instructors to be read and shown in the class. As colleagues whom I have shared details of my research agenda with, I knew that they would be willing to make an announcement in class and also were able to give some background information regarding the study when needed.

Second, I reached out to instructors in Sociology who were specifically teaching a course on race and inequality and asked if I could give a brief in-person presentation to their students in order to recruit participants. I figured that students in those courses were more aware of racial disparities and would be more prone to volunteer as a participant. These classes also typically draw a larger enrollment of non-White students—a harder to reach population at the University of Tennessee. I gave five in-person presentations.

My third mechanism of access came about later during the data collection process. As I begin to recruit participants, I noticed almost all of them were White students. This was not a surprise, especially at a predominately White institution where Black undergraduates make up less than 7 percent of the student population. As I wanted to understand any perceived racial differences among student's punishments or lack thereof with the use of BMCs in their classroom, I knew that I needed to diversify my sample. I requested that my infographic (see Figure 1) be published in the Multicultural Student Life's (MSL) newsletter. I was able to

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED!

Do these behavioral management charts look familiar?



When you were in grade school or middle school, did your teachers use disciplinary charts to track "bad" and "good" behavior on a daily basis? If so, Sociology graduate student, Aya Barnes would like to interview you as part of a study on the long-term effects of school discipline.

Must be a current UT undergraduate student

For questions or to express interest in participating, please contact Aya at xsj151@vols.utk.edu.



Figure 1: Recruitment Infographic

schedule four interviews with non-White students during the same week that the newsletter was published.

I hoped to continue recruiting participants, especially more non-White students, to solicit their views regarding my research. In late January, university officials announced that they were monitoring the coronavirus outbreak. By early March the university decided to transition online and to cease all fieldwork in the research community due to the outbreak of a pandemic disease. Unfortunately, the data collection process of my research was mandated to end despite not having enough cases to adequately answer all of my research questions. Nonetheless, the

interviews collected were enough to provide important insights into racial inequalities exacerbated by the use of BMCs.

Study Delimitations

In this study, I document the long-term effects of the use of BMCs in grade school on current college student's behavior by gaining the student's perspective on their use. It was necessary for me to ask how students changed their behavior (if they did) when in a classroom where BMCs were used, and, more importantly, if they continued to alter their behavior years after leaving classrooms with BMCs. The posed questions varied depending upon the responses given. My interview guide was continuously shaped by previous interviews, especially with regard to race. When Black students reported receiving demerits for one type of behavior, I asked White participants if they also received demerits for those same behaviors. One question that I did ask each interviewee is "Do you think some students were treated differently from other students?" When they replied affirmatively, I probed to see if I could identify the source of the difference (e.g., race, class, gender, or religion). This question was essential in gaining the perceived racial differences among student's punishments or lack thereof with the use of BMCs in their classroom.

As BMCs vary in style, I did not want to narrowly define BMCs by specifying, for example, only color-coded BMCs. Instead, I allowed any undergraduate who stated that BMCs were used in their elementary classroom to participate, whether they were color-coded charts, numbered, or symbol-driven charts. All BMCs have the same purpose, to reward or punish a student for their behavior (Krach et al. 2017). Limiting my research to only focus on color-coded BMCs would have potentially limited the outcome of my sample. From what I have gathered, teachers are not required to use BMCs in the classroom (at least, not among the classrooms that

produced University of Tennessee students), and if they choose to do so they have discretion for which type of chart they want to implement.

Limitations

These interviews probe how BMCs impacted students, if at all, while in grade school/middle school, and how those behavioral changes followed them into college. Since my sample only consists of current undergraduate students at the University of Tennessee, there was a selection effect. My findings were not representative of the entire population of students who may have attended classrooms where BMCs and other classroom strategies were employed. These students may have dropped out or decided not to continue on to college, or their school career may have been interrupted by incarceration. Although a few of my participants shared that they have been greatly affected by the use of BMCs, my sample likely represents those least affected by classroom management strategies. As students who now attend a public state, flagship, predominantly white institution, it is safe to assume that these participants are and were some of the more successful students.

A large majority of my sample are Southerners, especially students who attended elementary schools in Tennessee. Due to this, I understand that my sample is not representative of the larger population, but instead more representative of Tennessean experiences. The conclusions I draw may not be representative of and for all students across the country. My specific sample does not limit the influence of any outliers of extreme observations.

BMCs vary in style and format. Not all teachers use the same chart and or style or use them in the same way, so some charting systems have had more negative or positive effects than others, such as the daily charting systems compared to the weekly or monthly charting systems. It has been difficult to control for such an effect with my study design.

I have asked students about charts they encountered at least seven years ago, and I understand that memories can be faulty. This has been taken into consideration. For instance, when participants replied, “I don’t remember,” I did not wait in hopes that they would eventually remember or prompt them to think harder, I simply accepted that response and moved on to the next question.

I could not tell with certainty how much class, and at times race, played a role in the student’s perceived effects of using BMCs. Many of the same behaviors that warranted a student to move up or down the BMC were the same for a lot of participants, such as talking or not talking. However, we know that problems for Black and White students are not the same because their lived experiences are not the same. Silence looks different for different students and teachers. One may interpret their silence as being disengaged while another may interpret that silence as anger. There is still a differential effect, but it may not be race-related. Because my data collection efforts were halted, I was only able to recruit five Black participants. This small number of Black participants limits the input I have regarding Black students and their perceived effects of BMCs.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

BMCs are classroom behavioral management visuals that teachers use to publicly track students' behavior. My participants were primarily subjected to charts that were color-coded or symbol-driven. Color-coded charts typically use three or more colors, each representing how good or bad the student's behavior has been for the day. Green, yellow, and red are the most common colors used. Green signifies good or exceptional behavior, this means that the student has been following and obeying all classroom rules. Yellow represents a warning for the student. A student on yellow most likely have misbehaved or disobeyed a single classroom rule, but yellow usually does not warrant a demerit. Red indicates that the student has misbehaved more than once and usually calls for demerits, such as a phone call home, revoked recess time, or isolation from the other students. Symbol-driven charts are similarly used to signify good or bad behavior. Smiley faces are the most common symbol, where students are rewarded with one smiley face for every good behavior and one sad face or the removal of one of the smiley faces for every inappropriate behavior displayed. My participants would all start at the top of their chart (on green, with a green slip, etc.) and or start with a blank chart in hopes to collect smiley faces throughout the day. Starting on green or with a blank chart emphasizes that everyone has a fresh start, although the degree to which this gets experienced differs by context, which I will explain later.

All BMCs are publicized in the classroom, either the teacher or the student themselves will get up and move their clip or slip, and or insert or remove a sticker. Each student is identified by an instrument (usually with their name written on them) that is used throughout the day to move between colors on the chart. The most common instrument used are clothespins (i.e.

clips) for vertical charts. Some participants used pocket charts where each student had their own clear pocket (displaying their name) included with three or more color index cards (i.e. slips) or images (for instance, three animated cars or apples: one green, one yellow, and one red).

Participants who used pocket charts would have to replace their green card with the yellow card and then the red card depending on their behavior. Participants who used smiley-face charts did so with the use of a large poster formatted like a table where each student has their own row to place stickers. With the use of BMCs, students can typically only go downward, if a student was told to move their clip from green to yellow there is no way to regain their “good” behavior status on green. A student on yellow was expected to think very carefully about their actions in hopes to avoid going down further to red. Symbol-driven BMCs are more lenient since students can gain and lose stickers throughout the day. However, the goal for students with each BMC is the same; to avoid red or sad faces and to strive for green or an accumulation of smiley-face stickers.

Although teachers can move students’ clips and slips, for the most part, students are asked or told by their teacher to move their own clip or slip or remove a sticker for inappropriate behaviors. The most frequent behavior that warranted demerits was for talking. This involves talking to another student, talking without raising their hand, and talking out of turn. Other behaviors included not raising their hand to speak or answer a question, touching someone or an object when asked not to, shouting, forgetting to turn in an assignment or getting documentation signed, running in the classroom, slouching in a chair, leaving or having their desk materials unorganized, and showing disrespect (which is subjectively assessed by each teacher).

Drawing on a variety of theoretical perspectives, but especially from Jones’ (2000; 2002) work on institutionalized racism and the racial allocation of resources and opportunities,

Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) view of schools as sites that reproduce class differences, Lareau's (2003) work on children's interactions with adults and the reproduction of social class, and Crenshaw et al. (2015) and Bernstein's (2011) writing on the lack of innocence of Black children, I uncovered five primary outcomes that were unintended consequences of BMCs while analyzing interviews. These outcomes are as follows:

- 1) some students alter their personality in the classroom in response to BMCs;
- 2) BMCs make some students reluctant to seek help both from those in authority and also from other students;
- 3) students may be deterred from entering college and may disengage if BMCs make them think that they are bad students;
- 4) students are encouraged to sort their friendship networks based on BMC rankings;
- 5) the internalization of BMCs differed along racial lines.

Altered Personalities

Some participants shared how they altered their personalities in classrooms where BMCs were used—a habit that followed them to college--so that they are not perceived as academically and behaviorally incompetent. Instead of simply learning rules, participants reported that they took on an entirely different personality in the classroom, one much more reserved and silent. In elementary school, they altered their personality in order to be rewarded and to avoid punishments. They learned that being quiet and soft-spoken, or not talking at all, meant that they would stay on green or receive a smiley-face sticker. A student who was chatty and outspoken would frequently be punished, moving their clip to yellow or red. Later, while in college where BMCs are no longer used, students still alter their behavior in the classroom to present a more

restrained personality. Many participants shared they do this because they have normalized this behavior and feels that it is extremely difficult to stop:

Kilexyus (Black woman): For sure I'm more vocal outside of class and just more open and just, like, more like me, personality-wise. And in class, I very much do have a more reserved personality and just, you know. But outside of class I most definitely feel like a more well-rounded [person], like, in my opinions about certain things, if that makes sense.

Allie, a White woman who attended a majority-Black elementary school, altered her personality, too, to stay on green (in her classroom, green was the best color to have). She learned, through BMCs, that the classroom was not the space for her to display her usual personality. She still believes this to be true in college:

Allie: I would say Kindergarten was a really big like time when we, when I learned how school worked and how it was going to have to be, I was no longer a kid kid, but I was, but I had to start acting more mature and realizing that there's a time and place for everything and this is probably not the time for that [to act like a kid]... It's hard to get into the swing of, like, what's expected when you're an adult in college versus a kid in public school. It makes me very aware of how people view me and see me and I don't let, I try very hard to not have people to see me, like, in a bad way. I guess, like, I kind of pretend to be who I have to be.

Allie feels like she must pretend to be someone she is not while in the classroom. She does this to avoid being judged negatively and to appear more mature. The personality she takes on in class is one where most of her actions tend to be dependent on pleasing others and avoiding their negative judgments.

Anna, another White woman, found it difficult to escape the obedient personality she assumed while in elementary school:

Anna: It's just how I was, like, taught at such a young age. Like, I still, like, follow the same kind of rules everywhere just 'cause I think it's, like, what I'm supposed to do even if it's, like, not necessary. I feel like I don't, like, intentionally follow them [rules from BMCs]. I think it's just like in my brain...I dunno.

For Anna, the elementary school expectations of what defined obedient behavior became a habit for her. In college, she finds it difficult to let go of this identity and to act in her usual, everyday manner. Crystal, a White student, shared similar thoughts:

Crystal: Even though I'd want to chat my ear [mouth] off 'cause I'm a talkative person, I did not talk because I didn't want to move my slip or I didn't want to get in trouble. I noticed when some people blurt it [the answer] out in class and, like, it's my idea, I'm like, 'I was raising my hand.'

Crystal associates the students who blurt out answers in her college courses as being disobedient, and she feels a sense of unfairness that they are allowed to do so. Raising her hand in her elementary class was required; now that it isn't in her college courses she finds it difficult to speak freely and gets agitated when other students do so. Even as an extrovert, someone who enjoys chatting, she suppresses that part of her personality and is hesitant to talk freely in class as she sees that behavior as inappropriate, an internalized, learned thought.

Krystion, a Black participant, frequently found herself in the middle of her classroom BMC usually on S (satisfactory) or N (needs improvement). She explicitly stated how BMCs made her alter her personality in elementary and how it affects her in college:

Krystion: So, I just feel like they used that [BMCs] to define us...So it's, like, kind of taunting in a way 'cause it's kind of, like, you have to, like, suppress your feelings or suppress yourself in order to, um, be seen as being respectful so you don't, like, fall out of line. I'm kind of anxious to answer in class now, I feel like [my] mental health has been ignored for so long that like I've been forced to, like, [be] suppressive. So, really, I'm about to be 20 trying to, like, unlearn a lot of the bullshit I was taught when I was younger. I only raise my hand if it's, like, if we're sitting in silence for like seven minutes and the teacher's like, 'I'm going to wait on someone [to] answer.'" Then I'll answer.

Krystion believes that her ability to express herself was taken away in elementary school when she learned to hold back some of her thoughts and opinions to avoid getting on N (needs improvement) or U (unsatisfactory). She still believes that she cannot show her real personality in the classroom—that she's someone who enjoys talking and answering questions. In the classroom, she's anxious to speak out. She knows the answers to the questions posed, but she will only answer when her professors demand an answer. She needs additional permission to reply, which is not how adults normally interact with one another outside of a classroom setting.

Many college professors already have a hard time getting students to participate, to ask and answer questions during instruction. "The silence," following an instructor's question, that takes place in almost every college classroom, is a struggle for many professors (Boniecki & Moore 2003:224; McKeachie 2002). Active learning in the classroom where students engage with course material and participate in class discussions is important and valued and is shown to be more effective than when students simply sit and absorb information (Benjamin and Ludy 1991; Bonwell & Eison 1991; Bligh 1998).

There are a variety of techniques used to overcome “the silence” such as smaller group discussions (McKeachie 2002) and calling on specific students to answer (Gurung 2002). The fact that additional techniques to engage students in the college classroom are frequently discussed demonstrates that elementary and middle school tactics that shape students to enter the college classroom who have been, perhaps inadvertently, taught to avoid input, challenges the desired active learning environment. College professors want students who are willing to speak up, think critically, and give insights and observations (without additional permission) to challenge themselves, one another, and even instructors, and to strengthen the overall learning experience.

Reluctance to Seek Help

Many participants shared how they were reprimanded and forced to move their slip or clip to yellow or red on the classroom BMC for seeking or offering help. Whether they were asking the teacher directly or another student, vocalizing that they needed assistance caused them to move downward along their classroom BMC. Since seeking help was punishable in the classroom, some participants decided to no longer seek help or offer help. Even though seeking help is encouraged in college, participants are still reluctant to do so to avoid being criticized.

One participant, Turner, perceived to be of Indian descent who attended a predominantly white school, feels as though his ability to be an effective communicator has been negatively impacted. In his classroom, communication was the most frequent reason why students had to clip down to yellow or red. Turner explained that his social skills were affected the most, when asked to explain how he replied:

Turner: Because I mean obviously, like, you were not talking, but it’s also like you’re scared to talk or [have] anxiety. Like, [to] ask for a pencil or piece of paper

you would get in trouble for that in class, stuff like that. It's still so hard to ask, you know.

Turner is not confident in his ability to effectively communicate. He is hesitant to ask for and seek help because he does not want others to see him as incompetent and fears that there will be a punishment or judgment if he does ask.

When asked about behaviors participants felt should not have been punished, Titus, a Black man, shared that offering help was one of those behaviors:

Titus: I remember specifically in, um, maybe first, first grade I was actually trying to help a student with, um, something, I don't know what it was, but, um, the teacher told me to pull a card because I wasn't supposed to be talking and, um, that really made me feel bad 'cause I was trying to help someone out and I wasn't intentionally trying to disobey a rule or something, but, um, it was really, really humiliating because I thought I was doing [a] good deed trying to help [another] student...They [BMCs] don't serve a purpose. Like they don't teach students how to correct their behavior...I personally didn't want to be a part of the "troublemakers" so, um, to prevent that I just reserved myself to prevent being called out publicly...I just stay to myself in classes now.

Titus felt like he was wrongfully punished in the above scenario. Helping others was thought to be a good deed, yet he ended up on yellow that day for offering assistance to a fellow student. Feeling humiliated with his clip now on yellow, he decided to quit interacting with his classmates moving forward. He does not want to be embarrassed again for doing what he feels is right. In retrospect, he does not see his classroom BMC as effective, since students were

wrongfully penalized and never taught how to correct their behavior. Despite this attitude, Titus continues to stay to himself and rarely engages with other students while in the classroom.

Jackie, a White student, had a similar situation in her classroom where green, yellow, and red colored cars were used on the BMC:

Jackie: She was a newer teacher. Okay. I went straight to red because it was...this is the stupidest thing. Everybody.... [this is] so, like, vivid in my memory. She was, like, [be] silent, you're coloring. And I asked what color, like, a certain fruit was to my neighbor cause I wanted to color it right. She [the teacher] was, like, she lost it. She was like, 'I literally said "No talking,"' and I was like, 'You're right.' Honestly, I don't know why [but] I just spoke out loud. Me speaking out loud... and she was like, 'That's it.' And I guess she had just been fed up that day and just moved my car and I was like, 'Okay'...The next thing was recess and I remember when we walked out I was like, 'Well I guess this is what the kids do. We got to stand on the wall.' And then all my friends are like, 'Why are you on the wall? That's insane.' And I was like, 'It is insane.' ...I had the biggest meltdown ever.

Jackie was seeking help from another student and, in turn, had to move her car (used in place of index cards on the pocket chart) all the way down to red, skipping over yellow. She and her friends felt like that treatment was irrational and unfair. Not only was she devastated because her car color changed, but she also had to stand against the wall during recess.

Researchers show that college professors have a hard time getting students to answer questions (Boniecki & Moore 2003), coming to office hours (Smith et al. 2017), and seeking instrumental help (Karabenick 2003; Nelson-Le Gall 1981;1985). When college students are

comfortable asking for help and seeking resources, they will become students who are more motivated, driven, and higher achieving (Ames 1983; Karabenick & Knapp 1991; Karabenick & Sharma 2012; Schwalb & Sukemuni 1998). Also, students who are confident seeking help feel a “sense of belonging” at their university (Hoffman et al. 2002:237), while students who avoid asking for help have greater anxiety (Karabenick 2003). Help seeking is especially important for racial minorities at a university because the racial identities of faculty and staff matter very much when students are seeking help outside of the classroom (Cole 2007; Dika 2012; Layne 2012). One of the Black men in my study echoed the same argument:

Titus: I’ve definitely come out and, um, become more expressive...it definitely depends on the space though. Like, depends on how comfortable I feel and, um, definitely depends on, like, the racial demographic of the environment.

Participants in my study were reprimanded for seeking and offering help, and prior studies have shown that rules that restrict help seeking can have a deleterious effect on student outcomes (Ryan, Pintrich, & Midgley 2001). Incidents like the ones my participants shared could contribute to the struggle college students have when asking for assistance. If seeking and offering help made my participants feel humiliated, bitter, and irresponsible for doing so, how can we expect other college students who may have participated in similar BMCs to willingly seek advice or guidance from faculty, staff, and administrators? It’s important for students to feel comfortable seeking aid, especially low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented students. However, because of their experience with BMCs, students are not confident in seeking help.

Reduced College Aspirations

Student’s placement along BMCs created perceptions and expectations from outsiders regarding worthiness and ambition. Being that these charts are publicized, everyone in the

classroom (including visitors) can view where each student is (on green, yellow, red, with 10 smiley-faces, no smiley-faces, etc.). This glimpse of behavior allows others to make assumptions about each student. According to my participants, a student on green is a good student, someone who “behaves well” and follows directions, whereas a student on red is a troublemaker, problematic, and disobedient. As many of my participants have shared, these assumptions are frequently vocalized and at times internalized. While the students at the top of the chart, on green, most likely appreciate hearing that they are great students who do and will continue to do well, the same cannot be said for students at the bottom of the chart, on red. These students instead hear that they are bad students who will not do well in the future, students who will not make it far academically. Constantly hearing negative comments regarding their ability to succeed may deter students from entering college altogether.

One student, Austin, a White man who never got a good color and ended up at the bottom of the chart on red most days, believes that BMCs in elementary school discouraged him from attending college.

Austin: I would absolutely say my discipline and actions in that ranking system definitely had, um, an impact on my future decisions. I just believed that, you know, I had teachers tell me that, ‘You’re not a good student, you’re not going to do well in college or you’re not going to probably make it through high school. Um, so, I do think it played a role in my future decisions because high school I had written off. I said, ‘We’ll just see what kind of fun we can have here because I know I’m not gonna learn anything.’ When I got to college I barely knew how to turn on a laptop or didn’t know how to write an email or word processing, so you know, there was a giant learning curve for me.

Austin is a non-traditional college student. He did not enroll in college immediately after high school. It was not until he turned 25-years-old that he decided to attend a university. He struggled with his self-esteem, internalizing the negative comments from previous teachers and students and his poor position on his classroom BMC. He believed that he would not attend college, let alone high school.

Austin: It was a learned thing, I believed that I was not very smart, I wore that hat. I used to be really insecure and not think I had anything to offer the class. I wasn't very vocal. I never asked for help. But today, I've definitely built my self-esteem a lot more. I would say I'm way more engaged than I used to be.

Austin internalized the labels and stigma that came from his placement on the BMC in elementary school. He and his teachers felt like he was a bad student, so he became a disengaged student, which meant that he was not well prepared for college. He had written off the idea of school, especially college; those choices were determined by his teacher's judgments of him.

Jones (2002) speaks of institutionalized racism as a system that provides opportunities and appoints value based on how someone looks, specifically their race. As a system, it wrongfully advantages some while it disadvantages others. Jones (2002) argues that we do not invest in those who are disadvantaged, not allowing them the opportunity to "develop their genius" (10). Although Austin is a White man who is not affected by racism, BMCs as a system operates in the same manner as institutionalized racism. The same way resources are allocated where those at the top of the racial hierarchy have more and those at the bottom of the hierarchy have less, BMCs allocate perceptions of obedience and success where those at the top of the chart appear to have more and those at the bottom of the chart have far less. BMCs create rules where there is good and bad behavior just as white supremacist systems within society have

created a false dichotomy of good (i.e. White) and bad (i.e. non-White) people. With BMCs, students are defined as one or the other, good and successful or bad and unsuccessful. The students labeled as the latter will not be able to “develop their genius” and therefore it is lost. Austin became disengaged. Even though he went on to high school and eventually college, he went to college with great trepidation. When he entered college, he was not adequately prepared, and one wonders if—had he not been White—he would have ever attempted college or gotten the opportunity. I wonder how many potential college students are lost because of classroom management systems such as BMCs that make them believe they are not good enough or smart enough. BMCs can have the same impact that racism has (on a smaller scale of course), and BMCs may be a site where racial discrimination occurs. When we ignore the brilliance of certain students due to their perceived misbehavior(s), we are no longer investing in their education, as Jones discussed during an interview¹, we are “sapping the strength of our whole society.”

Encouragement to Sort

In elementary classrooms, students were both directly and indirectly labeled through the use of BMCs. Students who maintained a position at the top of the chart were thought of as good students, obedient and respectful. A “good student” knew they were “good” based on their teachers’ actions and words and also from the actions and words of other students in the classroom. Teachers would say “Wow, look at x student, they are doing a fantastic job.” Students who maintained a position on the lower end of the chart or in the unsatisfactory areas were thought of as bad students, disobedient, and disrespectful. Regarding those students, teachers would say “X student is not someone you should hang around, they are doing a horrible job.” These students are typically seen as the troublemakers and are often told that they will not do

¹ Camara Phyllis Jones, interview with the Institute for Health Policy, August 2, 2016.

well in that classroom and in life more generally. These labels result in students being encouraged to sort, to befriend students who act how they act, and who get the colors they get. Students on red should hang around other students who are on red and should not hang with students who are on green.

Jackie: Um, I feel like in the moment as like six or however old I was, I was like, okay, like, I'm the type of person who wants to be liked by the teacher and I'm going to follow the rules so I need to be on green. And then so you look at those people who are on green with you and those were, like, naturally my friends obviously. And then the kids who just like went buck wild all the time were the red kids.

Tyler: Um, I had friends considered the troublemaker kids and teachers [would] usually wonder how I hung around him. I honestly remember a teacher telling me that they were a bad influence on me, but I was like, no, these are just my friends, they clearly didn't affect me 'cause I didn't move down [on the BMC].

Allie: Like, at first we were going in, like, pre K we all were kids, we all played in the sandbox, like, we were all just crazy kids and then kindergarten is kind of whenever we started, like, okay, green is who you need to surround yourself with and to be like, and you need to stay away from the kids who are pulling their cards because they're going to go down a bad path later on in life. And like that's not where you need to be or who you need to associate yourself with.

Lyric: It [BMC] led me to hang out with a more positive group of friends. Like I would see the other kids who were constantly get[ting] in trouble and get[ting] their colors moved and they will have to, like, miss out on recess or lunch with

everybody I didn't want to be in that group of them. So, I started hanging out with more of the nicer kids who were doing, like, did things like I was and being recognized.

Holly: I will say the one kid that I was talking about that always got in trouble, [it was] not just me, everybody seemed to distance their self from him because he was the person that, he was the bad kid and I hate to think about [it] now but we all did. Most of us considered him the bad kid. And a lot of it was, well my mom worked there. She knew a lot of the families and he didn't have guidance from home. So, she always talked to me about it and she was like, okay, we're not going to be mean to him 'cause she seen it [family issues]. Cause she said one time, and I've never thought of this, but at the lunch table he literally was sitting by his self and after that day she came home and she talked to me. She said, "We're not going to do this. You know, we're not going to leave him out just because he gets in trouble a lot"... It's like you're [the 'bad" kid] going into everything thinking everybody hates you or dislikes you.

Liz: It's, like, oh, like, they're, getting in trouble. Like if I, like, hung out with them a lot and especially in class [the teacher] would be like, oh no, they're going to get me on red...So I kinda learned, like, not to, but I mean like I was still friends with like all of them kind of, you know, like you have your classmates [but] you have your actual friends that you hang out with outside of class and stuff. So, I kinda kept it more like classmate, [instead of] like friend [or] relationship.

Austin: I think they [other students] looked down at me, um, but you know, I kinda, like I said, I counteracted it with sports, so they, everybody knew I was good at sports. I was never, I was always the first pick, but when it came to the classroom, you know, I always had a tough time finding groups, partners and stuff like that. So, you know, and even the parents, you know, [it] was at a private school, the parents are really involved and I remember it, you know, like wanting to do a sleepover or something and I never was able to, you know, it just never worked out. And over the years I kind of figured, well it was because they didn't want, you know, those parents didn't want their children hanging out with me because I was kind of the knucklehead, I guess you could say.

Crystal: But I always, I would say even growing up I remember my mom even saying like the teachers would be like, 'Crystal needs to hang out with so and so,' and there's this one particular girl that was like the goodest and got every single award each year. [The teachers and my mom would say] 'I feel like she needs to hang out with so and so' and, like, I just wasn't, I never liked to get in trouble, but I wasn't like a complete goody-two-shoes if that makes sense. And all of my teachers would always be like, '[student] is such a great girl, she makes good grades, really well behaved.' They would like try and put me with someone like that, but I just didn't [care to befriend someone like that].

Krystion: 'Cause I know if I hang out with someone who typically was lower on the charts, they'll be like, you know, you're not supposed to be hanging out with so and so, you know, they do this, you know. And it's kinda like they want you to

only stick with one crowd of people. What about the kids who don't have friends because you want them to be isolated because they are seen as being bad?

Trohalis: Um, I'd say like when I was on green I was proud of myself and I even I'll admit to judging the kids who are on red, but I definitely felt like really ashamed if I was even on yellow.

Kilexyus: I think, like, there was always like one or two students who consistently were just like on red or something that I just didn't want to be paired in groups with. Cause like if they were on red they just weren't pleasant to be around.

Titus: I definitely tried to stay away from people that were, um, that were labeled as 'bad' and the ones that got on red multiple occasions cause I, like I said, I didn't want to associate myself with that group because I was raised to obey and, um, follow the rules and I didn't want to, um, I didn't want to get, called to the principal's office or get a call home.

The way students are encouraged to sort by BMC ranking can be explained, in part, by Bourdieu and Passeron's (1977) theoretical framework on education as an institution that reproduces social class. This framework was influential in the work of Lareau (2003), who argues that parenting styles can reinforce social class. Working class children are praised for following directions—skills valued among factory-line workers, for example--while middle class children are praised for being creative—skills valued among white collar workers. Other scholars (Aries and Seider 2005; Boocock and Scott 2005; Giroux and Schmidt 2004) have built on Lareau's work to demonstrate the congruence between teaching styles and parenting styles as a means of reproducing social class, Nelson and Shutz (2007) demonstrate that these teaching styles can steer children as early as in daycare.

Predominantly black schools that are economically disadvantaged or are assumed to be (Smith 2005) are sites where teaching styles value rule following. Children's interactions with adults—in this case, teachers—are dominated by injunctions to follow rules (Lareau 2003). BMCs reinforce the idea that “good” children are obedient children, and that those who are “successful” (i.e., most obedient) can reinforce their “success” by interacting with other “successful” children.

Students who are on red are only encouraged to hang with other students on red, creating a community of red, or unsatisfactory, individuals. As Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) noted, this is problematic as those students on red will be disadvantaged and subjected to symbolic violence. They are not encouraged to hang with the “better” students, to learn from them, and to gain symbolic capital. A power differential exists between the two groups and the students on red will have the least amount of power. But the student on green may also be victims of symbolic violence, as creating groups of rule-following friendship peers encourages the kinds of rule following that reinforces the skills valued only in poorer paying blue collar jobs. These “good” students are not subject to what Lareau (2002:31) calls “concerted cultivation” where an adult “actively fosters and assesses [the] child’s talents, opinions, and skill.”

Racial Differences in Internalization of BMCs

My research did not uncover any explicit differences in behaviors for which White and Black students received demerits. Most participants shared the same rules and behaviors that warranted demerits or warranted them to move downward on their classroom BMC. Talking, not following classroom rules or directions, being off task, and being disrespectful are the most common reasons students received demerits on the BMCs. While I did not uncover any differences in behaviors or demerits, I did uncover differences in how Black participants

internalized those demerits. The Black participants spoke about how their BMC placements were immutable at least that is how it felt to them--compared to the non-Black participants.

White participants shared that, with the use of their classroom BMC, students started over at the beginning of each day. So, no matter how far down a student went the previous day, when they arrived in the classroom the next day they were placed back at the top of the chart, and that felt like a fresh start. Allowing the students to start over each day symbolizes that they are no longer being held accountable for previous misbehavior(s). With this idea, it appears students are taught the importance of having a second chance and the ability to redeem themselves.

For each Black participant, this fresh start method was also used in their classroom, however, what differed between the Black and White participants is that the Black students (and two non-Black students at predominantly Black schools) felt as if students who misbehaved were never truly given a second chance. Participants spoke about the stigma and labels that came with being a student at the bottom of the chart. Teachers would explicitly call them “troublemakers,” “bad” students, and often would associate their current behaviors with expected behaviors in the future.

Many of my participants felt as though they and other Black students were not given a second chance by their teachers. They also noticed that the same students repeatedly received demerits:

Kilexyus: The kids who are consistently bad, I think they were always kind of corrected for every little thing. [Compared to other] students who weren't ["bad," they] could get away with a certain amount of disruption or talking before they had to pull a card.

Krystion: They didn't have the patience with me to, like, really understand my anxiety...it [avoidance] starts to affect your conduct for the next day. I felt like it [BMCs] was used to define us in a way. It upset me how one day dictated so much or, like, how I acted one day, 'cause I had one bad day, dictated how, like, teachers viewed me or they, like, underestimated me. So, I just feel like they used that to define us. Like after one meltdown, they would taunt me, or like the teachers were looking at me some type of way. I would get very frustrated and irritable. Like they use those charts to label us. 'Cause if I hang out with someone, they'll be like, 'You know you're not supposed to be hanging out with so and so, you know they do this or do that.' And it's kinda like they want you to only stick with one crowd of people...It makes you feel as if that's just you...I just thought of it as a way of being degraded or isolated by everyone...It's embarrassing. It's fucking humiliation.

Titus: Like, it was a[n] everyday thing. The students who ended up on red, they were consistently on red. And I think...you should learn from being punished. And I don't think this system allows students to learn where they're doing wrong.

Tyler: For the main part, it was the same students getting the lower colors...I remember, like, if we had a substitute teacher, the teacher will leave a list for the sub to be like, these are the students you can basically trust...and based on that list, you can tell [who couldn't be trusted].

Two non-Black participants who attended schools with a large majority of Black and Brown students shared similar sentiments regarding how "bad" students were never given a second chance to redeem themselves.

Trohalis: The kids who were on red, um, the teacher kind of just like assumed that they weren't as intelligent as the rest of the kids. The kids who were on red were always on red. You're automatically starting out like kids are just judging other kids at their early age...I would try to, like, sit up straight or try to make it look like I deserved to be on green and I, like, and I had to prove to her [the teacher] that I still deserve to be on it [green] even though slouching or having my pencils everywhere wasn't going to get me on yellow.

Allie: Once you have the reputation of, like, okay you are kind of a troublemaker, then the teacher was definitely more likely to catch all of the little things that you did. Whereas she might've missed it for other kids just 'cause she was paying so much more attention [to them, the troublemakers]. You were the focus. She was kind of like picking on them, she just noticed everything more. She'd be like, 'Green is who you need to surround yourself with and you need to stay away from the kids who are pulling their cards because they're going down a bad path later in life'...I guess annoyance is really how I would put it. Just depending on how annoyed you make the teacher is what your cards lands on.

There were noticeable differences in the perceived lengths of punishment. Once a Black student landed on red or "annoyed" the teacher during a single day, from that day forward they were labeled as disobedient, bad, troublesome, and even untrustworthy. They were not given a chance to redeem the previous day's actions, even though it appeared that way on the BMC. Even as a 5- or 6-year-old, they were not viewed as having a degree of innocence where misbehavior is considered minor and forgettable. The stigma of being a bad student not only meant that they would be treated differently by their teacher, but also by other students.

Students tended to disassociate with students who frequently had to pull their cards or who were on the lower colors. They did not want to be partnered with these students on assignments, they did not want to be their friends, and for the students who did try to establish a relationship with those “deviant” students, they were persuaded and encouraged not to do so. A bad student at a predominately Black school was expected to be more mature than their given age, they were intentionally isolated from their peers, and they automatically were labeled and believed to be a troublemaker not only for that day’s actions but even the next day.

Scholars have noted how Black students are viewed as inherently deviant (Rios 2011) and seen as less innocent than their peers of other races (Crenshaw et al. 2015; Goff et al. 2014; Bernstein 2011; Givens & Nasir 2018; Dumas & Nelson 2016). Due to these negative assumptions, schools with a large majority of Black and Brown students tend to have a “youth control complex” where the student’s behavior and style are frequently criminalized (Rios 2011). This leads to the students feeling shame, being excluded, and punished. Rios (2011) talks about how this complex and process prevents these students from prospering and feeling a sense of pride.

Scholars theorize a challenge Black students face is a lack of innocence (Crenshaw et al. 2015; Bernstein 2011; Goff et al. 2014), where—no matter their age—the behavior of Black children is never written off as simply expected childish actions. We see this in the frequency of Black children being tried as adults in the court system for the same law violations for which White students are tried in juvenile court. This lack of innocence does not create a space for Black children to live in their childhood. Normal childhood behaviors like tantrums and talking back is seen as a criminal threat when exhibited by Black kids (Bernstein 2011). Therefore,

Black students are more at fault for their actions (Goff et al. 2014). Innocence is not typically applied to Black, Brown, and poor youths (Giroux 2000).

This argument is by no means a new one. In 1855 Frederick Douglass proclaimed that Black children are innocent and can feel pain by stating that “slave children *are* children” (Douglass 1855:41). Then and still today, Black children are seen as undeserving of innocence, much older relative to their peers, and more aware of their actions. Consequently, they face more consequences, especially for subjectively “bad” behaviors (Goff et al. 2014; Crenshaw et al. 2015; Nasir et al. 2019). The findings from my study reflect this, in a limited way.

Mediating Influences

Some participants felt as if BMCs have not negatively affected them nor their actions while in college, and they see these charts as a thing of the past. It is worth noting that participants who shared this perspective had strong parental/home influences. Researchers have shown how parental involvement and home influences are important and essential in students’ performance (Fields-Smith 2007; Freeman 2010; Graue & Benson 2001; Lee & Bowen 2006). Although their teachers and school administrators embodied a sense of control and the importance of being obedient, their parents would refute this at home. Jackie’s mother embraced her after having to move her clip and expressed that those charts were not reflective of her true character. Her mom reportedly said, “That was really not that serious, please get over it, like, you’ll be [back] on green tomorrow.”

Instead of their parents reinforcing the importance of BMCs, like some of my participant’s parents did, some parents helped their children cope with those feelings of incompetency by expressing the unimportance of BMCs in real life or outside of their classrooms. Home influences can be very important in building self-esteem and self-actualization

for children. If a child is told that they are “bad” and “won’t make it far” during their 8-hour school shift, but this information is contradicted during the other 16 hours of their day, they tend to believe their parents/guardians and do not tend to internalize the messages coming from their school, teachers, and other students in their classroom.

Other participants did not feel affected by BMCs because they rarely had to move their behavior stick or get disciplined. These students who were rewarded more and labeled as “good” students may not realize how (if at all) their actions and behaviors today are affected. They may have normalized having an obedient mindset and attitude (Woodson 1990) or may see their “good” actions as necessary for gaining cultural capital. The participants who felt as if BMCs were necessary mostly said so when speaking about what they perceived to be a “misbehaving child.” Allie said that kids who are 5 and 6 years old are, “off the chain...wild...probably don’t get attention at home.” These statements most likely resemble the statements teachers make when deciding to implement BMCs in the classroom because, as argued, students who are off task disrupt the order of the classroom, sometimes making it difficult for teachers to continue their lesson (Sugai and Horner 2006). This is a valid point. A certain amount of classroom order is necessary to create a space for learning. However, as I will emphasize in the conclusion, models at Montessori schools work well to maintain the classroom order without the use of BMCs (Lillard & Else-Quest 2006). Models following these schools can be an effective alternative to adapt.

CHAPTER FOUR CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In *The Miseducation of the Negro*, Woodson (1990 reprint of 1933 book) argued that Black students were not being taught in American schools, but rather being culturally indoctrinated. He argued that Black students had ideas, attitudes, beliefs, and strategies of inferiority and dependence instilled in them by those who hoped that those ideas and attitudes would transfer from one generation to the next without question or challenge. This brainwashing and conditioning caused many Black people to become blind to their conditioning and ultimately obedient. Woodson wrote:

If you can control a man's thinking you do not have to worry about his action.

When you determine what a man shall think you do not have to concern yourself about what he will do. If you make a man feel that he is inferior, you do not have to compel him to accept an inferior status, for he will seek it himself. If you make a man think that he is justly an outcast, you do not have to order him to the back door. He will go without being told; and if there is no back door, his very nature will demand one (1933:84-85).

Woodson contended that instilled feelings of Black inferiority created the obedience necessary to ensure a perpetual working class (1990). I believe that it is not only thinking, but also behavior that leads Black students (and people) to Woodson's figurative back door. Systems for creating obedience and submissiveness are still present today; the back door now has everlasting hinges.

One system for creating obedience and order is the classroom BMC primarily used in elementary schools. These charts create expectations of compliance: follow rules, listen, and

remain quiet. These systems serve as a measurement technique to judge if the student's behavior meets the classroom expectations for discipline. When a student's behavior does not meet the classroom expectations, that student receives a demerit. Those demerits are used to encourage students to avoid "inappropriate" behaviors and follow all classroom rules and expectations.

In my thesis, I was particularly interested in exploring how the use of BMCs impacts Black students asking how, if at all, these charts have contributed to students' changes in behavior over time. Specifically, I have asked how do BMCs used in elementary school affect perceptions of student's agency (actions/behavior) in college? Do these systems influence college student's perception of their ability to be effective communicators outside of the classroom? Do college students perceive that there were differences in behaviors for which Black and White students received demerits? Are there noticeable differences in how Black and White college students perceive the effects of these charts on their current actions?

- 1) Do BMCs used in elementary school affect perceptions of student's agency (actions/behavior) in college?
 - a. Yes, some students still alter their personality in the classroom in response to BMCs.
- 2) Do these systems influence college student's perception of their ability to be effective communicators outside of the classroom?
 - a. Yes, BMCs make some students reluctant to seek help both from those in authority and also from other students.

I was unable to directly answer my latter two research questions as my participants did not provide answers to these questions and I was not able to continue to recruit participants until I achieved theoretical saturation. Therefore, it is unclear if there are differences in behaviors for

which Black and White students receive demerits and if there are noticeable differences in how Black and White college students perceive the effects of these charts on their current actions. However, I did find noticeable differences in how Black and White college students internalized their given demerits.

In addition to this finding, I uncovered two additional unintended consequences that stem from BMCs.

- 1) students may be deterred from entering college and may disengage if BMCs make them think that they are bad students;
- 2) students are encouraged to sort their friendship networks based on BMC rankings.

Altered Personalities

Classrooms should be a place where students learn to act in the real world. Yet, students are socialized to act aberrantly in normal settings. There seems to be a huge contradiction between the educational system supposedly preparing students for the real world versus a classroom management system that does the opposite. When adults are sitting on a committee, sit around a board room table, or even go out to a party, we do not expect them to raise their hand or seek additional permission to speak as we saw with my participants. Groups function really well without the need to raise hands and alter personalities. In fact, young students at Montessori schools (populated primarily by privileged White children) do really well with allowing freedom in the classroom for children to display their normal personalities, without BMCs (Lillard & Else-Quest 2006). Yes, it's important to manage a classroom in order to prevent chaos. This expectation of well-behaved students in a well-behaved classroom is reasonable, but how important is it for children to sit up straight or keep their pencils orderly? Models used at Montessori schools could be an effective alternative. If students did not alter their personalities

in class, the discussions and conversations between both students and faculty could be much more stimulating and thought provoking. Moreover, and more importantly, students would learn to nurture their creativity and independence—the skills most valued in high-paying jobs (Lareau 2003).

Reluctance to Seek Help

As I have shown from my study, BMCs can and have affected college student's communication skills. Not only are students altering their personality and being quieter than they usually are, but they are also reluctant to seek help. Again, students are not being equipped for the real world. The higher educational system is known for its leadership development ability. We want students to graduate and go on to become business leaders, executive directors, and entrepreneurs, but how can this be an expectation when students have difficulty communicating and asking for help. Managers are responsible for making decisions, managing, and motivating employees; all of which require exceptional communication skills. If my participants have shared that they believe those skills are affected, what would a future in a leadership position look like for them? We must create spaces where students feel comfortable seeking help as we know this will provide them with greater motivation, less anxiety, and overall success (Karabenick & Knapp 1991; Karabenick 2003).

Reduced College Aspirations

BMCs create a false belief that some students deserve opportunities while others do not. This belief is typically based on a day's worth of behavior, though sometimes longer. One student showcases great behavior so they deserve a treat or special recognition while the student(s) who did not showcase the same behavior deserves to be isolated from the group or must turn their desk towards the wall for the remainder of the day. While that may seem

insignificant and even appropriate, it is not always that simple. Isolating one student denies them the opportunity to speak to others, to share ideas, to ask questions, and to “develop their genius” (Jones 2002:10). Denying one student any opportunity that another student has creates inequity in the classroom (and perhaps beyond the classroom). Jones (2000) uses the tale of a gardener to simplify institutional racism where the government is the gardener who has the power to 1) decide, 2) act, and 3) control resources. Teachers who use BMCs have the same power as the government, they are the gardener who uses BMCs as their gardening tool. They have the power to 1) decide who receives rewards and who receives demerits, 2) determine who is allowed to speak and who must remain silent, and 3) control the class resources, such as the use of furniture, equipment, technology or textbooks. When we create a notion of deserving and undeserving students, it can affect their sense of motivation and aspirations, where the undeserving students may feel hopeless or worthless and decide not to further their education. How many other Austin’s are there? Furthermore, how many other students are there who were never able to make it to Austin’s position?

Encouragement to Sort

The way my participants were encouraged to sort with the use of BMCs relates to social stratification within our society. Students on green should only associate with other students on green, whereas students on red are only allowed to participate with other students on red, with hopes that the two groups will not integrate. Sorting helps to reproduce social class. Students who can follow rules (e.g., stay on green) will likely obtain a working-class job where following directions is a valued skill. However, students who cannot follow rules (e.g., get on red) may end up unemployed or imprisoned as a result of being subjected to symbolic violence. While the students who follow rules may seem like they are getting the advantage, they too are being

subjected to symbolic violence, encouraged to only be as successful as the generation before them. Your mother was a factory-line worker and since you, too, are obedient, perhaps you will get a job as a factory-line worker in the future. No student benefits from this encouragement to sort, it reproduces social class where inequality is very prevalent.

Racial Differences in Internalization of BMCs

BMCs appear to have a “fresh-start” quality where a student’s previous day actions, actions that are deemed inappropriate, are forgiven and forgotten. However, for Black students and students at predominantly Black schools, this fresh-start quality felt nonexistent. When entering the classroom the next day, students were verbally and non-verbally reminded of the previous day’s actions. My participants shared how these students were never given the benefit of the doubt or had their actions shrugged off with the recognition that they were having a bad day. They were not allowed to demonstrate their innocence as other children were and are. Demonstrating to Black children that they are undeserving of innocence prevents them from thriving and feeling a sense of dignity. Instead of brushing off yesterday’s experience, they instead might repeatedly think about that experience as it relates to their treatment each day afterward, internalizing its affect. They may question their worth, they may decide that they need to take on more responsibility than other children their age, or they may feel pressured to engage in adult-like behaviors (some of them harmful). On the other hand, having this outsider’s perception of being inherently deviant (Rios 2011) or guilty causes unfair disadvantages and turmoil for that Black child. They may be tried as an adult in the criminal justice system or face police violence if accused of a crime (Goff et al. 2014), they may face harsher punishments by educators and school resource officers (Crenshaw et al. 2015; Epstein, Blake, and González 2017), they may not be properly nurtured in the child welfare system (Epstein et al. 2017), they

may be hypersexualized by adults (Dagbovie-Mullins 2013), or they may be murdered by a police officer who assumed they were an adult (Dahl 2015). Black children must reclaim their childhood and educators should work to make sure this happens. Regardless of the context, all Black children deserve equal treatment as given to their non-Black counterparts. Adultification is extremely dangerous for Black children, and the fact that BMCs help to reproduce this form of dehumanization is troubling.

BMCs are implemented to maintain classroom order. While they may seem to be doing just that, there are long-term unintended consequences for students. Classroom management strategies around discipline and order are important to investigate and it is why this study is so important. We assume that any student who makes it to college is doing just fine, unaffected by their past, and persistent in their efforts. However, we now know that that is not always the case.

BMCs and other non-exclusionary strategies should be studied as frequently as exclusionary strategies. As scholars, we need to know how widely BMCs have been used. When and why were BMCs first introduced in classrooms? This is an important question to ask and consider for future research. It is also important to know whether BMCs were and are being used primarily in inner city schools, poor schools, Black schools, or just southern schools. Right now, there is not enough literature to help us answer these questions. I encourage more scholars, but especially education scholars, critical race scholars, and critical education scholars to look more into BMCs, their foundations, and their impacts.

This study opened more understanding of how students are and can be affected by a system that is considered a thing of the past. It presents an opportunity for the academic community to hear the voices of some students who are greatly affected by the use of BMCs, even though they may not have noticed it before. It opens discussion on and questions these cute,

fun, non-problematic systems that students must adhere to while in the classroom. Lastly, this study could initiate the conversation needed to remedy harmful classroom management systems and to instead create a less harmful approach or remove these systems altogether, giving all students, but especially those who are already marginalized, the opportunity to prosper.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Interview Guide
Study of Classroom Behavioral Management Charts

School Recall

- Describe your grade school and middle school?
- Did your schools use behavioral management systems?
 - Describe them
 - Could you ‘start over’ each day?
- Did your teachers use behavioral management charts in the classroom?
- Is there a particular grade that you recall being first introduced to a behavioral management chart?
- What type of chart was this?
 - Explain its use
 - Explain characteristics of the chart: colors, phrases, etc.
 - Teacher’s discretion?
- Were rewards and punishments used with the system(s)?
 - What are examples of rewards a student could receive?
 - What are examples of punishments a student could receive?
- How would you explain your behavior in that grade/during that time?
 - Were you rewarded or punished more?
 - Why & when were you rewarded?
 - Why & when were you punished?

Past Effects

- Overall, how did the use of those systems make you feel?
- Did you notice any effects those systems had on your behavior during that time?
 - On your class engagement?
 - Relations with other students?
 - Relations with teachers, administrators?
 - Relations with parents/guardians/family?
 - In spaces other than school or home?
 - Where?
- Do you think other students were treated differently than you were when your teacher used BMCs?
 - Teachers/students treatment
 - On the premise of their:
 - race
 - gender
 - religion
 - other characteristic(s)?

Current Situation

- How many hours are you taking this semester?
 - How many courses in all?
- Do you currently engage in any of the same practices/rules that you did during (past experience)?

- (e.g. still raising your hand before you hand?)
 - How often?
- Do any of your current classes have strict behavioral rules that you must adhere to?
 - What are they?
 - Which classes?

Current Effects

- How would you feel if the same (past experience) system was currently being used in your courses?
- Do you see any of the past systems translating into your current behavior?
 - In the classroom or outside of the classroom?
 - Where? What spaces?
 - How so?
- Do you believe behavioral management charts should still be used today?
 - Why or why not?

Any final/lingering thoughts about behavioral systems?

Any questions you wish I would've asked?

Appendix B: Recruitment Email

Dear Sociology Colleagues,

Will you please read the following announcement aloud to your students in your current courses:

“When you were in grade school or middle school, did you teachers use disciplinary charts to track ‘bad’ and ‘good’ behavior on a daily basis? If so, Sociology graduate student, Aya Barnes would like to interview you as part of a study on the long-term effects of school discipline. Please email Aya at xsj151@vols.utk.edu to be a part of the study.”

I’m happy to answer any questions you might have about this project, and I appreciate your willingness to share this information.

Best,

Aya Barnes
M.A. Candidate
Department of Sociology
University of Tennessee Knoxville

Appendix C: Informed Consent Statement

Informed Consent Statement

Study of Classroom Behavioral Management Charts
Aya Barnes, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Stephanie Bohon, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

INTRODUCTION

You have been invited to participate in a research study. This study seeks to examine the long-term effects of behavioral management charts used in grade school and middle school on current college student's behavior while in higher education. It is my hope that it will provide valuable information for schools considering ways to address the current classroom management systems as a reevaluation on what they have considered to be successful.

INFORMATION ABOUT PARTICIPANTS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE STUDY

I will ask you questions about the behavioral management chart used in your elementary classrooms in which you participated. The interview should last no more than two hours, typically lasting one hour. The interview will be audio recorded, and these recordings will be transcribed for analysis. I will take notes after the interview that captures your responses and the environment of the interview setting.

RISKS

We assume that there are no risks to this study other than those encountered in everyday life.

BENEFITS

There are no anticipated direct benefits to you that will result from participating in this study. This study can potentially influence the way in which policymakers, members of school boards, and teachers structure, enable, and execute policies that affect students and work to manage disciplinary actions and their ramifications. My study can provide information about how behavioral management systems affect students so that the information is available to policymakers and educators who want to shrink the attainment gap and fight to alleviate racial and educational oppression.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to refuse to be interviewed as part of this study. You are free to decline to answer any question or questions, or to withdraw from the study at any point without consequence. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will not be used in any published report.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Participants will be given an option to be for attribution or without attribution (confidentially with a pseudonym). Unless you, the participant, selects "for attribution" on the informed consent there will be no identifiers in the data. Participants who select to participate confidentially and without attribution will have their data stored under a pseudonym, no reference will be made in oral or written reports which could link those participants to the study.

Information in the study records will be kept confidential. Data will be stored securely and will be made available only to persons conducting the study.

FUTURE RESEARCH

We will keep your information to use for future research. Your name and other information that can directly identify you will be deleted from your research data collected as part of the study.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions about the study of the interviews, you may contact the principal investigator, Aya Barnes, at 423-504-9541 or xsj151@vols.utk.edu or Dr. Stephanie Bohon at 865-974-7109 or sbohon@utk.edu. If I have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Tennessee Office of Research IRB Compliance Officer at utkirb@utk.edu or (865) 974-7697.

CONSENT

I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the chance to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have more questions, I have been told who to contact. By signing this document, I am agreeing to be in this study. I will receive a copy of this document after I sign it.

Name of Adult Participant	Signature of Adult Participant	Date
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For Attribution

I understand that this interview will be audio recorded, and I agree to such a recording.

Name of Adult Participant	Signature of Adult Participant	Date
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Researcher Signature (to be completed at time of informed consent)

I have explained the study to the participant and answered all of his/her questions. I believe that he/she understands the information described in this consent form and freely consents to be in the study.

Name of Research Team Member	Signature of Research Team Member	Date
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VITA

Aya Barnes was born in Chattanooga, TN. She received a Bachelor's of Arts in Honors Sociology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in May 2018 and graduated cum laude. She was awarded the Department of Sociology Most Outstanding Graduate Award for both her undergraduate thesis, "Environmental Racism: The Flint Water Crisis", and performance in classes. She continued her studies in the same department with a Critical Race and Ethnic Studies concentration. Aya will receive her Masters of Art in Sociology in Summer 2020.