THE PERCEPTION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CLASSDOJO IN MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOMS: A TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

by

Michael Scott Burger

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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ABSTRACT

This transcendental phenomenological study modeled after Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological reduction investigated the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool for three middle school classrooms at Cardinal Unified School District (pseudonym). The research questions for the study were aimed at understanding teachers' and students' perceptions of the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool as well as the necessary resources and experiences to implement it well. Furthermore, this research aimed at explaining teachers' perceptions of how the use of this tool affected their administrators' view of them as teachers. The participants consisted of 3 teachers and 12 students in a diverse school district in Southern California with about 20,000 students. Data collection consisted of a brief survey, observations, interviews, and focus groups. The data was analyzed in line with Moustakas' phenomenological reduction (1994). The findings from this study indicated that ClassDojo is a highly motivating classroom management system for the student participants. Students and teachers alike mentioned the fact that ClassDojo has an effect on student achievement, explaining that it is probably due to the fact that ClassDojo increases student engagement. While participants envisaged many technological devices needed for the ideal implementation of ClassDojo, ultimately teachers can still implement it well without a sizeable technology budget. Furthermore, the teacher participants expressed that they perceived their administrators to generally like their use of ClassDojo, although this belief is not why they used it. Rather, the properly managed classroom was reason enough for them.

Keywords: classroom management, ClassDojo, behavior management, technology

Dedication

The purpose of this section of my dissertation is to dedicate this work—a work that has deprived me of so many privileges, opportunities, hours with my family, and hours of sleep, that I might have otherwise enjoyed. With such a task at hand, it seems futile to me to dedicate such a work to anyone other than God. Were it not for God, I would not have had the strength to make it through. Were it not for God, I would not have had the brainpower equal to the task. Were it not for God, I would not have had the breath in my lungs necessary to make it from one moment to the next through the course of these couple years in order to complete this work. Therefore, it is with great gratitude and appreciation that I dedicate this paper to the One True God—YHWH—"…from whom all things came and for whom we live…." (I Corinthians 8:6 New International Version). After all, in the end it is *all* about Him:

> And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever" (Revelation 5:13 New American Standard Bible).

Acknowledgments

While God was my supplier, supporter, and counselor during this journey without Whom I would not have made it, there are also many human beings whose support, confidence, and motivation spurred me on. Without these individuals, this dissertation would not have been possible. They have selflessly sacrificed so much, taught me so much, and/or supported me so much that a short paragraph in this dissertation seems to me to be so trite. Nevertheless, I wish to take this opportunity to publicly thank them for their influence on me.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my wife, Ashley. “Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all” (Proverbs 31:29 New International Version). Your constant support and encouragement have been invaluable to me these past few years. It is hard to imagine something more difficult for a woman whose love language is “quality time” than for her husband to go through a doctoral program (Chapman, 2015). Nevertheless, you have forced a smile on your face almost every time I told you I needed to go work on my dissertation. I thank you for your understanding each and every time I had to be gone—whether at the office or in the next room. I promise I will not start another degree for the next two months—I mean, years.

To my two wonderful daughters, Grace and Eliana, I thank you for your sacrifice as well. There have been so many hours that you have given up with daddy and so many times that I have had to say, “Not right now.” My only hope has been that the completion of this degree will mean so many hours with you both that I would not otherwise have been able to spend. Grace, I am ready to play trains with you now—for hours on end!

To my parents, Bill and Gerri, I thank you for your constant support and guidance, especially in my formative years. If there is one thing that being in the Education sector has taught me, it is the importance of parents who care enough for their kids to tell them “No” when necessary and to provide for them and push them when necessary. You two struck that balance very well and I am eternally grateful for the privileged upbringing you provided. Without your support and drive I would not have been able to accomplish this. Thank you, dad, for passing on your relentless work ethic that was a necessary skill in this seemingly insurmountable task. Thank you, mom, for your unceasing positive attitude. That example of refusing to be negative even when all seems lost paid great dividends while I was lost in this dissertation.

To my siblings, thank you for your friendship and support as well. Each of you has influenced me in such a way that made this feat possible. Thank you, Will, for setting the example for us siblings to follow. Your emphasis on education early on definitely inspired me in that direction. I would not have sought this degree without your example. Thank you, Staci, for your example of working and studying hard. That is an indispensable trait when one is trying to do an assignment such as this, which seems impossible at the beginning. Thank you, Marie, for your love of life and ability to make any situation fun. My journey into the depths of this dissertation seemed so gloomy at times. Yet, your humor (whether actually from you or just played back in my head while writing during the wee hours of the morning) definitely helped me make it through.

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List of Abbreviations

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Liquid-Crystal Display (LCD)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Technological application (app)

Technologically savvy person (techie)

United States (U.S.)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

This chapter sets out the background for the need to study the use of ClassDojo in American middle school classrooms. Special attention is given to the researcher's role and how my experience influenced the desire to study this topic. The problem that led to this study is explained, which leads to the problem and purpose statements of this research. The significance of the study on the field of Education is detailed. I also outline the research questions that guided this study. Ultimately, the chapter ends with an outlining of the research plan and design.

Background

Many teachers and administrators argue that it is difficult for students to learn when there are constant disruptions in a classroom (Edwards & Mullis, 2003; Kariuki, 2009; Pass, 2007; Rahman, Nabi, Basit, Saeedul, & Ajmal, 2010). In fact, McIntosh, Flannery, Sugai, Braun, and Cochrane (2008) believe there to be a two-way relationship between behavior and academics so that behavior can affect academics and academics can affect behavior. Allman and Slate (2012) examined the different forms of discipline employed in America since the 1960s. Although they focused mainly on more serious offenses than simply being talkative or disruptive in class, they concluded that despite the rising disciplinary problems in school, the serious interventions American educators and administrators currently use (such as in-school suspensions and expulsions) are ineffective. Additionally, teachers today have a more limited number of interventions than their teacher counterparts of 50 years ago (Allman & Slate, 2012). Corporal punishment would be an example. Because of the ineffectiveness of the interventions available to teachers, many administrators are allowing deviant behavior to go unpunished and the level of acceptable behavior is deteriorating even further in many schools (Allman & Slate, 2012).

Because of the connection between behavior and academics (McIntosh *et al.*, 2008), there is a need for a classroom management solution that can help stem the growing tide of deviant behaviors demonstrated by American students.

The problem is more complex than just focusing on classroom management, however. This deterioration in the level of acceptable behavior within schools is exacerbated by the fact that teachers have less and less time to devote to developing classroom management systems and strategies (Crotwell, 2011). One of the reasons for this is the fact that many administrators are adding requirements onto teachers that did not once exist, especially regarding the use of technology (DeWert, 1999; McInnis, 2002). Teachers are being required to incorporate technology into the classroom so much so that it is included on some teacher evaluations (McInnis, 2002). According to the Michigan State Department of Education (2000a), for instance, the state calls for school districts to "be encouraged to include technological competency as an aspect of teacher hiring and evaluation" (p. 28). Whale (2006) reports that out of 220 school districts studied, one fifth of them included technology as a component of their teacher evaluation forms. While he decries the fact that this number should be much higher due to research showing how important technology integration is for student achievement, the reality is that these numbers are much higher than they would have been just a few decades ago in the world where the only so-called technology in a classroom was a blackboard and an overhead projector. Because of this shift toward technology, a good deal of teachers' time is dedicated to learning and incorporating new technologies into the classroom, thereby reducing the amount of time they can afford to spend in other areas such as classroom management (Crotwell, 2011). Since this is the case, the wise teacher would look for a classroom management solution that somehow incorporates technology in order to satisfy both dilemmas—the fact that a classroom

management solution is needed and that administrators increasingly desire to see technology in the classroom.

Situation to Self

Very few, if any, enter the teaching profession for monetary gain. Rather, most teachers want to help students succeed. At the same time, however, many teachers realize very quickly that some students simply do not want to learn and would rather spend more of their time disrupting the class. This is often frustrating to teachers. As one of those teachers, I was always looking for tools or strategies that would allow me to mitigate disruptive student behaviors in order to ensure that I was helping as many students as possible. I believe ClassDojo has been such a tool. Therefore, I will be conducting this research to determine if that is the perception of other teachers and students and why.

Problem Statement

As described previously, teachers are finding it more and more difficult to manage a classroom as their options for discipline are narrowing and becoming less effective each year (Allman & Slate, 2012). This coupled with the fact that teachers are being pulled in many more directions than their counterparts of just a few decades ago—and therefore have less time to dedicate to working on classroom management—makes it all the more difficult for teachers to truly manage their classrooms (McInnis, 2002). This is especially the case when one considers that a few decades ago there was no need for teachers to incorporate technology in the classroom. Nevertheless, new technologies are emerging every year that are designed for the classroom. It is possible that one of these technologies that have been recently developed might be able to address both the need for teachers to advance technologically and the need for teachers to manage their classrooms.

One solution that may have the potential to address teachers' classroom management and technology concerns is ClassDojo. In this web-based system, students receive avatars that they can customize. When they do something good in class, their avatar receives a positive point but when they do something bad, their avatar receives a negative point. These avatars are all controlled either by the click of a mouse or by the touch of a finger on an application (app) on a mobile device. According to the authors of ClassDojo, it is intended to be a classroom management technology (ClassDojo, 2014).

Therefore, it is important to study the topic of classroom behavior (especially as it relates to technological inventions such as ClassDojo) in order to examine how teachers and students perceive the effectiveness of this technology in managing classroom behavior. If teachers and students perceive this technology as effective, it could mean a reduction in disruptive behavior within classrooms, which would lead to students learning more (Pass, 2007). Furthermore, it might help address teachers' concerns about meeting the increasing demands of their administrators regarding technology. As such, I will investigate the perceptions of middle school teachers and students with respect to the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool that both addresses teachers' need to advance technologically and aids in managing a classroom (McInnis, 2002).

Purpose Statement

Moustakas (1994) lays forth a model for transcendental phenomenological research. Following this research design, the purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to describe the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool for three middle school classrooms at Cardinal Unified School District (pseudonym). The perceptions of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of

ClassDojo as a classroom management tool was generally defined as whether they perceived the tool as being conducive to fewer classroom disruptions (Meany-Walen, Bratton, & Kottman, 2014) and/or higher student achievement (Shupe, 1998; Sowell, 2013). Furthermore, middle school was defined as sixth through eighth grades.

Significance of the Study

Roache and Ramon (2011) found that it is fairly common for teachers to respond in hostile ways when students misbehave, which often leads to more misbehavior. Murtaza, Khan, Abdur, and Saeed (2012) also found that 75% of their participants believed that the teacher insulted students as part of their classroom management techniques. As mentioned by Roache and Ramon (2011), a cycle of misbehavior may ensue and worsen as students go from misbehaving to feeling like they are being mistreated, then back to misbehaving, and so on. Since ClassDojo is intended to provide students with immediate feedback concerning their behavior without the teacher directly confronting a student, there was the potential for this research to result in a significant reduction of this misbehavior, as that cycle would never have the opportunity to emerge.

More generally, this study had significant implications in addressing the problem previously stated. Since teachers' classroom management strategies are decreasing and becoming less effective (Allman & Slate, 2012), and since technology integration is yet another responsibility being shouldered by teachers (McInnis, 2002), the implementation of ClassDojo in the classroom had the potential to alleviate two problems at the same time—namely, reducing disruptive behaviors and fulfilling teachers' requirements for technological integration.

Research Questions

Moustakas (1994) argues that "the challenge [of phenomenological research] is to explicate the phenomenon in terms of its constituents and possible meanings, thus discerning the features of consciousness and arriving at an understanding of the essences of the experience" (p. 49). It is clear that phenomenological research is focused primarily on understanding participants' experiences of a certain phenomenon and boiling down their statements to the essence of the phenomenon.

As described previously, teachers find themselves having less and less time to devote to developing with regards to classroom management (McInnis, 2002). At the same time, they find themselves having to focus more on technology in order to appease administrators (DeWert, 1999; Whale, 2006). These two conflicting realities result in teachers' need to both develop more effective classroom management techniques and systems, while also ensuring that they develop technologically. Because of this, many different technologically-based educational tools have been and are being created. Yet, all are not created equal. Therefore, it is important to evaluate these technologies in order to determine if teachers and/or students find them to be effective. There was a gap in the literature regarding the perceived effectiveness of one of these technologies—ClassDojo. The following research questions were designed in order to attempt to understand how the participants in this study perceived their experiences with ClassDojo:

Research Question One: How do teachers and students perceive the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool?

Research Question Two: How do teachers and students perceive the implementation of ClassDojo to influence student achievement?

Research Question Three: What technology and/or other resources do teachers and students perceive as necessary for the most effective implementation of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool?

Research Question Four: What previous technological experience(s) do teachers perceive as necessary to effectively implement ClassDojo?

Research Question Five: How do teachers perceive their use of ClassDojo to influence how they are viewed by administration with regard to using technology in the classroom?

Research Plan

This qualitative study employed a transcendental phenomenological method to describe the lived experiences of three teachers and 12 students regarding the implementation of ClassDojo. Moustakas (1994) indicates that the starting point of transcendental phenomenological research is the process of epoche, or bracketing out one's personal experiences. The *epoche* stage, which calls for the researcher to eradicate any presuppositions about the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994), was a necessary component of this research since I used ClassDojo for two years in my middle school classroom. After the *epoche* stage, I collected data concerning the participants' shared experiences with the implementation of ClassDojo by way of interviews, focus groups, and observations. The phenomenon in view was the perception of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool. Moustakas (1994) explains that transcendental phenomenology is the "scientific study of the appearance of things, of phenomena just as we see them and as they appear to us in consciousness" (p. 49). Since I desired to understand the perception (i.e. appearance) of teachers and students regarding ClassDojo's effectiveness as a classroom management tool, the transcendental phenomenological method was appropriate.

Delimitations and Limitations

This research has two delimitations—that participants were only selected from middle school, general education classrooms. Delimiting the study to only middle school was necessary as strategies vary depending on the developmental level of students (Martin & Baldwin, 1996). As such, if the study were not delimited in this way, the data from the participants would likely have differed greatly due to their differing perspectives on classroom management. Delimiting the study to the general education setting was necessary for a similar reason. While Oliver and Reschly (2010) focus mostly on teacher preparation programs, they allude to the fact that special education teachers handle classroom management much differently than their general education counterparts. Furthermore, governmental agencies limit what disciplinary actions are available in a special education setting as compared to general education. (Michigan State Department of Education, 2000b). Because of these two differences between special and general education, it was necessary to delimit the study to one of these groups as the perceptions of special education teachers and students regarding the phenomenon would have likely differed from those of general education teachers and students.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Much has been written in the literature about classroom management. The same is true of technological integration. In this chapter, I will attempt to note the main themes of both those discussions and examine how they relate to one another. I will do all this in an effort to examine how technology and classroom management strategies have been or could be combined. Ultimately, this will lead to an understanding of how ClassDojo can be used as a technological tool that will address classroom management issues.

Theoretical Framework

There are at least two theories by which I have been influenced in my approach to this study. First, B. F. Skinner (1953) studied human behavior and developed the theory we now call behaviorism (or operant conditioning). On the surface, it would seem that ClassDojo itself is designed to reinforce certain student behaviors, which is the very basis of operant conditioning. The other theory to which I have looked regarding this study was put forth by Albert Bandura (1986). He is credited as being the father of Social Cognitive Theory. Proponents of this theory espouse that humans always learn in a social context. Because of the nature of ClassDojo—that it individually reinforces behaviors, while doing so corporately as well—Social Cognitive Theory may shed light on the implementation of this technology.

Behaviorism (Operant Conditioning)

B. F. Skinner is well-known for reevaluating and furthering the ideas of classical conditioning (Miller, 2011). Whereas those who espouse classical conditioning (such as Pavlov) purported that humans acted out of a reaction to a stimulus (a reflex), Skinner extended this understanding to *operant* conditioning in which humans respond not to a reflex but to a reinforcement (Miller, 2011; Skinner, 1938). He argued that the stimulus is not something that

necessarily comes first. Rather, in operant conditioning, a person acts a certain way somewhat randomly (at least initially). Then they notice the result of their acting that way. Either there is a positive result (or reinforcement) or a negative one. When a person's actions produce what they deem to be a positive result, they continue those actions; if their action is met with a negative result or reinforcement, they tend to shy away from these actions in the future (Skinner, 1938).

The theory of behaviorism (or operant conditioning) is applicable to this study because it closely aligns with the philosophy behind ClassDojo. The technology is based on the idea of rewarding students for behaviors the teacher deems good (a positive reinforcement) and punishing them for behaviors the teacher deems bad (a negative reinforcement). The underlying assumption is that students will notice the behaviors that earn positive reinforcements and repeat those behaviors. Likewise, teachers hope that students will notice what behaviors earn negative reinforcements and refrain from those. Ultimately, if ClassDojo causes students to learn which behaviors are positively reinforced (and attempt to repeat them) and which are negatively reinforced (and attempt to refrain from them), teachers will likely consider it to be an effective classroom management tool.

Social Cognitive Theory

About the same time B. F. Skinner was developing operant conditioning, there were many other psychologists developing what would become known as the Social Learning Theory (Miller, 2011). The basic tenet of Social Learning Theory is in direct contradiction with Locke's belief that children are *tabula rasa*—blank slates (Miller, 2011). Rather than holding this belief, proponents of Social Learning Theory claim that even infants can begin to organize their experiences and are intentional in at least some of the things they do (Bandura, 1979). Bandura extended the ideas of Social Learning theorists in his construction of the Social Cognitive Theory

(Miller, 2011). Whereas many Social Learning theorists believed that children innately learn how to behave by being around others in society, Bandura brought cognition to the forefront (Miller, 2011). Bandura explained that there is a process of cognitive activity that goes on as children interpret the world around them, specifically behaviors that others exhibit. So, children observe what others do and decide whether or not that is something they want to do (Bandura, 1979; Bandura, 1986; Miller 2011).

Social Cognitive Theory, of course, has implications for the implementation of ClassDojo since the technology is entirely designed around this concept. Teachers give students rewards for good behavior and punishments for bad behavior. While the process of handing out the reward or punishment is quite discreet, everyone in the classroom can see not only that a reward or punishment was given, but also the reason for which it was given. The hope of the teacher is that the punishment will keep other kids from exhibiting negative behaviors and encourage the replication of positive behaviors by their learning of what happens to others. In other words, teachers hope that students will see which behaviors their classmates exhibited and think about whether or not they want to engage in similar behaviors. This demonstrates the theoretical constructs of Social Cognitive Theory as students who are not directly involved with receiving a point on the ClassDojo system are able to learn, develop, and grow from watching their peers receive one.

Related Literature

This study hinged on two different aspects of modern American education: classroom management and technology. Furthermore, it dealt with the crossover between the two in that I researched how teachers and students perceived one specific technology to be effective as a classroom management tool. As such, the review of literature focused on two areas. First, it was

important to examine the past and present body of literature regarding classroom management. It was necessary to see what classroom management looked like in the modern American classroom as well as what strategies have been researched and deemed to be effective. Next, it was important to examine the past and present body of literature regarding technology. This consisted of examining how technology had been used in the classroom as well as the validity of incorporating it into the classroom.

Classroom Management

There are few things on which beginning and veteran teachers, administrators, and even the general public agree. The need for effective classroom management, however, is one of them (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006). Beginning teachers often find themselves surprised at the level of misbehavior that is so rampant in secondary classrooms within the United States (Nahal, 2009). Yet, it has not always been this way. Just 50 years ago, it was not common to deal with such egregious behavior problems in the classroom as are seen today (Allman & Slate, 2012). In order to properly understand where we are, it seems necessary to see from where we have come.

The history of American classroom management.

Few would argue that classroom management in America is the same as it was in the early days of American education. While this fact might be well evident to all educational stakeholders, it is important to peer back into the past decades and centuries of American education in order to orient oneself to where America presently is with regard to classroom management. Looking back and watching the progression of American classroom management will allow any interested person the ability to better understand where American education currently is (and perhaps where it is headed).

Colonial period.

Colonial classroom management was marked by corporal punishment (Firmin & Castle, 2008; Garrison, 2007). “In his 1770 compilation of English laws, William Blackstone applied the phrase *in loco parentis* to educators. By definition, teachers were given the parental right to act as they would when responding to disciplinary problems” (Conte, 1994, p. 308). As such, educators often chose to meet disciplinary problems with corporal punishment. While this may seem harsh to many modern educators, it was not without precedent at this time in history. In fact, many cultures prior to the American Colonial period allowed for much harsher discipline. In the past, the Babylonian, Hebrew, Greek, and Roman cultures each allowed a father to discipline his son even to the point of killing him (Garrison, 2007). With the passage of laws allowing the teacher to act *in loco parentis*, the teacher was, in effect, the parent while students were at school. Whatever means the teacher deemed necessary to correct the child was allowable. Indeed, it was protected under the law. Garrison (2007) rightly notes, however, that at this stage in American history, education was not compulsory. As such, it was ultimately the parents’ decision whether or not to leave their child in the care of a particular teacher (and that teacher’s disciplinary tendencies).

Perhaps one of the reasons for the proliferation of corporal punishment in the American Colonial period has to do with the nature and setting of the classroom. Butchart (1995) mentions that the classroom looked much differently in that time period than it does now. Whereas now all students are included in the teachers’ attention at virtually all times, in the Colonial period, students were alternately given the focused, one-on-one attention of the teacher. While one student would recite memorized facts for the teacher, the rest of the class was to be busy working individually at their seat. As such, teachers in this time period spent much of their day with most of the students either in their peripheral vision or behind them. Due to this dynamic, teachers

"maintaining haphazard surveillance while attending to recitations, relied on force and fear alone to maintain order, punish misbehavior, correct errors in lessons, and pass on to their charges an idea of the moral order of their society" (Butchart, 1995, p. 169). Therefore, while the Colonial period in America was marked by corporal punishment, it may have been a necessity due to the differences in the setting and culture of the classroom during that time.

Nineteenth century America.

While the transition was gradual, many authors have noted a major shift in classroom management by the end of the 19th century (Butchart, 1995; Conte, 1994; Firmin & Castle, 2008; Garrison, 2007). While many seem to agree on this time period as being marked by a monumental shift in classroom management away from corporal punishment and toward other means, there seems to be little agreement regarding the cause for this change. Butchart (1995) simply attributes this change to differing tactics amongst educators. He specifically points to Joseph Lancaster's monitorial schools in which the impetus for discipline was shifted from the teacher-student relationship to the student-student relationship. Rather than having teachers delve out justice, Lancasterian schools were marked by students trying to better themselves in order to become monitors—special students recognized for their success and placed in a mentoring role over other students (Butchart, 1995). Furthermore, students and classes were ranked in order from least to greatest in very overt ways so as to motivate the lower performers. The main critique of this type of classroom management is that it seems to devalue and belittle students (Butchart, 1995).

While Garrison (2007) offers a very simple explanation for this shift away from corporal punishment in classrooms—that education became compulsory and parents were no longer able to choose their children's teacher, and were therefore less trusting of the teacher who was chosen

for them—Firmin and Castle (2008) believe it to be rooted deeply in the ever-changing philosophy of the American people. They note that the foundation of education was rooted less and less in religion and, as such, man was "viewed as good and perfectible (rather than depraved)..." (Firmin & Castle, 2008, p. 109). Furthermore, they point to the increase in scientific discovery, especially as it relates to the feebleness of the human body, as a reason for the decrease in corporal punishment for less punitive methods (Firmin & Castle, 2008). Conte (1994) somewhat agrees with this latter reason, although he attributes this understanding to the publication of Dewey's *School and Society* in 1900.

Whatever the reason, the fact remains that the late 19th century brought about changes in the area of classroom management. Whereas American teachers had been known for corporal punishment for the last century or two, the tide was starting to shift away from these methods in favor of less punitive ones. To be sure, corporal punishment was still present, but its prevalence was decreasing.

Twentieth century America.

The most monumental change in the 20th century regarding classroom management was the progression of the doctrine of *in loco parentis* (Garrison, 2007). The latter half of the 20th century especially was marked by multiple court cases that affected the interpretation of this doctrine. With each court case, students' rights as protected by the Constitution were further explicated. With each of these clarifications to the understanding of minors' rights (especially regarding their rights while in school), a corresponding adjustment to the doctrine and interpretation of *in loco parentis* immediately followed. As each court case's decision was handed down, students were afforded more and more rights under the law. While each of these court cases did not necessarily directly affect *in loco parentis*, there was an indirect connection in

that each right afforded to students meant a resultant right that was taken from teachers. While teachers had virtually unlimited rights concerning how they could deal with students in the classroom before this series of court cases, with the passing of time, each court case acted as a tick of the grandfather clock that was teacher autonomy. With each tick, the pendulum swung further from the extreme of ultimate autonomy for teachers under the doctrine of *in loco parentis* and toward more rights for students.

As previously described, teachers had full autonomy regarding discipline in their classrooms in the 19th century. This theme continued into the first half of the 20th century as well so that teachers were allowed to exact corporal punishment on their students whenever they saw fit. If one were to take a snapshot of a typical classroom in 1950, corporal punishment would have been in full swing. Teachers would have been allowed (and oftentimes encouraged) to spank their students for disobedience. This is evidenced by the fact that the Office of Civil Rights in the Department of Education did not even begin keeping records of spankings for another 20 years (Cryan, 1987). Much of the basis for teachers' ability to spank students at this time was due to the fact that minors' rights had not been defended or explained in legal cases as of yet. As such, the pendulum was still at the extreme position where *in loco parentis* afforded teachers the ability to act completely autonomously.

The decline of in loco parentis' robustness.

The first tick in the clock of teacher autonomy was *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969) in which students were suspended for peacefully protesting the government's position on Vietnam. The Supreme Court ruled that "it can hardly be argued that either students or teachers shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate" (*Tinker v. Des Moines*, 1969, Section I, para. 2). As such, this decision moved the pendulum slightly away from

the complete autonomy afforded under *in loco parentis* in that school disciplinarians now had to worry about infringing on students' rights at school. A teacher before this decision did not even have to consider the notion of students having rights to freedom of speech as adults had. After this ruling, however, teachers' actions would have to be tempered by whether what they were doing was infringing on students' rights to freedom of speech. Indeed, Justice Harlan recognized this in his dissenting opinion when he declared that this decision would limit school officials' authority by saying that "school officials should be accorded the widest authority in maintaining discipline and good order in their institutions" (*Tinker v. Des Moines*, 1969, Dissent section, para. 1). This case upheld and confirmed that students' rights as outlined by the First Amendment were the same whether at home or at school.

The pendulum continued to swing away from the complete autonomy of *in loco parentis* in *Goss v. Lopez* (1975). In that case, nine different students from multiple high schools had been suspended from school for 10 days. The argument of these students and/or their parents was that they had not received Due Process rights under the 14th Amendment in that they were unable to state their case and defend the fact that they did not deserve such a punishment, nor had they been given any evidence of their disciplinarians' justification for the punishment. While a District Court had sided with the students, the administrators appealed the decision to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court confirmed the decision and sided with the students stating again that students still had 14th Amendment rights when they were at school. As such, they should have received Due Process which, in this case, would have required being informed of the charge against them and having an opportunity to present their side of the story to administration before being suspended for 10 days. With this decision *in loco parentis* continued to diminish in influence in that students' rights were further outlined. With these rights being more concrete,

limitations were placed on teachers regarding school discipline that had not previously been in place. For instance, whereas teachers could once easily expel a student from their class (or school), now teachers and administrators had to be conscious of the possibility of infringing on students' 14th Amendment rights by doing so.

Only two years later, a very similar case was once again heard by the Supreme Court. In *Ingraham v. Wright,* (1977) the validity of a teacher's decision to inflict corporal punishment (spanking) on a student was in question. While the teacher's decision was upheld by the court, this case further swung the pendulum of teacher autonomy away from pure *in loco parentis*. At first glance, it would seem surprising that the Court allowed for this corporal punishment inflicted by a teacher. Though the Court declared that the teacher was allowed to inflict physical harm on a student, they added that it was only acceptable so long as there was "'an informal give-and-take between student and disciplinarian'" (*Ingraham v. Wright,* 1977) that preceded the punishment. In light of the fact that school discipline necessarily needs to be carried out swiftly, this discussion that took place between the teacher and student seemed to the Court to be a sufficient opportunity for students to present their side of the facts while still receiving Due Process. Therefore, whereas the Court sided with the teacher in this case, it did so only with the knowledge that the student had received their 14th Amendment right to Due Process (albeit, in a diminished form as compared to the requirements on police officers). As such, while the *action* of the teacher seems to be something more permissible for a quasi-parent than a government employee, the *reason* that the action was permissible was because the teacher acted in a way that the Court deemed to be appropriate for someone representing the arm of the government. This dependence upon what is appropriate for a state official rather than a surrogate parent can be seen in Justice Powell's delivery of the opinion of the court when he discussed the authority of

the teacher. He stated that “the concept of parental delegation has been replaced by the view - more consonant with compulsory education laws - that the state itself may impose such corporal punishment as is reasonably necessary” (*Ingraham v. Wright*, 1977). Whereas teachers before the hearing of this case would delve out punishment at their whim, with this ruling it was made clear that there were parameters that had to be followed when teachers punished students. This was yet another shift of the pendulum away from the extreme of ultimate teacher autonomy.

While it is now evident that the preceding three cases continued to erode at the principle of complete autonomy afforded by *in loco parentis* in educational law, *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* (1985) was the final nail in the coffin of that principle, at least with respect to the Fourth Amendment. This was accomplished despite the fact that the Court sided against a student’s rights. In her claim against the state, T.L.O. argued that her Fourth Amendment rights had been impinged upon since her purse was searched for cigarettes. The opinion of the court was that the school officials did not need a warrant to search her purse as long as they had a reasonable suspicion (rather than just a hunch) that she was breaking the law or school rules. In a concurring opinion, Justice Powell wrote that “without first establishing discipline and maintaining order, teachers cannot begin to educate their students” (*New Jersey v. T.L.O.*, 1985). As such, searches were allowed (and perhaps other citizen right infringements implied) in light of the need for immediacy of discipline in a school setting so long as the school officials did so based on a reasonable suspicion of law or school rule infringement.

Even though *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* (1985) sided in favor of teacher’s rights, the concept of *in loco parentis a la* the Fourth Amendment died with the decision of that case. In Justice White’s writing of the opinion of the court, he mentioned that *in loco parentis* was the common theme of the justification of teachers’ actions in prior cases, but that the reality that teachers act

as surrogate parents of students was not conducive with the then current reality of education. Specifically citing *Tinker v. Des Moines* and *Goss v. Lopez,* Justice White explained that teachers had been required to act in accordance with the First and Fourteenth Amendments in such a way that the Court would require of a government official, not a parent. On these grounds, in *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* (1985), Justice White said, "If school authorities are state actors for purposes of the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression and due process, it is difficult to understand why they should be deemed to be exercising parental rather than public authority when conducting searches of their students" (*New Jersey v. T.L.O.*, 1985, Section II, para. 12). In saying this, Justice White made it clear that there are definite aspects of education (such as searches and seizures, for instance), which demand that school officials act more as the arm of the state, rather than as parents. In essence, Justice White argued that while *in loco parentis* might have validity in other cases, it was inconsistent with what ought to be expected of teachers and administrators regarding searches and seizures in a school setting. Regarding *in loco parentis* as compared to students' Fourth Amendment rights, Justice White mentioned that "the Court has recognized that 'the concept of parental delegation' as a source of school authority is not entirely 'consonant with compulsory education laws…'" (*New Jersey v. T.L.O.*, 1985, Section II, para. 8).

As is evident, *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969), *Goss v. Lopez* (1975), *Ingraham v. Wright* (1977), and finally *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* (1985) represent swing of the pendulum of American educational law away from the once undisputed concept of teachers' total autonomy afforded by the doctrine of *in loco parentis.* As timelessly stated by Justice Fortas "It can hardly be argued that either students or teachers shed their constitutional rights…at the schoolhouse gate" (*Tinker v. Des Moines*, 1969, Section I, para. 2). As the other aforementioned cases have made clear, this

principle not only applies to the First Amendment right to Freedom of Speech, but to the Fourth Amendment right to not be subject to unreasonable searches and seizures as well as the 14th Amendment right to Due Process of Law. Indeed, one could argue that the notion that students' rights do not change based on their location applies to every right that a citizen is afforded.

Ultimately, these cases point to the reality that students' rights were constantly and progressively explained in the second half of the 20th century. With each of these explanations of students' rights, teachers who were once completely autonomous in the decisions they made regarding corporal punishment, now had to consider if the actions they were taking were infringing upon any of their students' rights that were now written in judicial reports. The notion of being concerned about infringing on their students' rights would have been foreign to teachers in the early part of the 20th century. As such, in a matter of 50 to 100 years, the pendulum had swung from one extreme—total autonomy for teachers as afforded by *in loco parentis*—to a more centrist position (or perhaps another extreme) in which teachers' ability to exact corporal punishment was (and is) tempered by the need to afford their students the Civil Rights that are due them. In the end, this means that teachers have fewer options (with respect to corporal punishment) for maintaining discipline and a peaceful learning environment.

The rise of parens patriae.

Garrison (2007) explains that *in loco parentis* has increasingly been overshadowed by *parens patriae*—the state's responsibility to take care of those who cannot care for themselves. In a roundabout way, then, the principles of *in loco parentis*, albeit in a much diminished form, remain in *parens patriae*. Garrison (2007) explains this, saying that on the basis of *parens patriae*, "If children have rights to an education that the state must finance and provide, then…the schoolteacher may use reasonable and timely corporal punishment…with regard to the

other schoolchildren whose rights to an education the wayward child is disrupting" (pp. 118-119). While some teachers' rights still remain with *parens patriae*, the reality is that it is not as robust as *in loco parentis*. For instance, while the justification for physically striking a child was not difficult under teachers' total autonomy afforded by *in loco parentis*, one can hardly make an argument for physically striking a child based on trying to be the arm of the state in the state's responsibility to care for those who cannot care for themselves (Garrison, 2007).

While the pendulum swing away from utter autonomy afforded by *in loco parentis* was aimed at arming students with more rights, the reality is that every right given to students in this area is a right taken from teachers. As such, some have expounded on the fact that teachers stripped of the ability to physically touch a child in the classroom have grasped at whatever means necessary to control students (Butchart, 1995; Conte, 1994). Whereas classroom management was once about working hard to make sure each student learned, now it is more focused on working hard to simply attempt to create an environment in which learning is possible (Conte, 1994). Whereas classroom management was once about shaping today's youth into the responsible citizens of tomorrow, now it is more focused on controlling the bad behavior of one student so the whole class does not get out of control (Butchart, 1995).

Review of the past.

The preceding has demonstrated that there has been a general trend in American classroom management. This trend has been to gradually stray away from corporal punishment which was the hallmark of classroom management in the Colonial period. This trend has been celebrated by modern educators as the just way to treat today's students. It also, however, has been demonstrated to introduce new challenges into the modern American classroom. One of the most important new challenges is the rise in today's behavioral problems (Allman & Slate,

2012). Another challenge is the reality that whereas the Colonial period allowed for parental choice in their children's teachers, modern compulsory education does not. Conte (1994), in an attempt to sum up the changes in classroom management from the Colonial period until the end of the 20th century states the following:

> The reality of the 1990's is that: (a) teachers do not receive the respect from parents that they used to receive, (b) more students come to school with behavioral problems than ever before, (c) teachers are not sufficiently trained to deal with today's behavioral problems, (d) the myth of the "good" teacher discourages teachers from asking for the assistance they need, and (e) relevant curriculum content is not always enough to motivate students to behave as once thought (Canter & Canter, 1992). All of these factors have combined to diminish a teacher's real or perceived ability to influence students' behavior. It is that loss of influence that has made it more difficult for many teachers to effectively maintain discipline in the classroom (p. 310).

While Conte (1994) indicates the bleakness of the situation, the reality is that there have been strategies and systems developed in the 21st century to address some of these concerns. These advances will be discussed subsequently.

The current state of American classroom management.

While there is certainly value in peering back at the past centuries in American education, doing so is not an end in itself. Rather, the value in looking to the past is to learn how one has arrived at the present. In doing so, one can focus on their current reality with a different perspective than otherwise available. As such, this section is focused on the current state of American classroom management in light of the previously mentioned understandings from the past.

The reality of American classroom management.

In reviewing the literature regarding classroom management and discipline, one of the most prevalent emerging themes was the expectations of both the presence and effectiveness of classroom management strategies from outsiders' perspectives. While classroom teachers know that classroom management is something very important and vital to the functioning of the classroom each day, it was also evident that pre-service teachers and even community members knew about the need for a robust classroom management system in schools (Allen, 2010; Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Funk, 2013). In fact, "fifty-two percent of first year teachers, 28% of teachers with two to five years of experience, and 26% of teachers with 6 to 10 years [of] experience ranked classroom management as their greatest need" (Funk, 2013, p. 4). So clearly classroom management is an important issue to educational stakeholders from many different arenas. It is not simply something with which first-year teachers need to be concerned. Rather, a significant portion of veteran teachers, not to mention administrators and general members of the community are interested in classrooms and teachers that exhibit good classroom management.

Despite virtually all educational stakeholders focusing on and being concerned with classrooms that display effective classroom management strategies, the reality is that classroom management is one of the most fundamental problems with education today (Edwards & Mullis, 2003; Jeloudar & Yunus, 2011). Students are exhibiting more and worse aberrant behaviors than students of the past, to the point that teachers from all different abilities and experience levels are listing classroom management techniques as their greatest needs (Benhar, 2009; Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Funk, 2013). In fact, Benhar (2009) explains that teacher retention has become a significant problem for a few reasons, one of which is the "lack of necessary skills to deal with behavior problems in classroom life… [which causes] teacher burnout that eventually leads to

leaving the profession" (p. 1). The reality that aberrant student behaviors and difficulties with implementing classroom management have led to teacher burnout and teachers leaving the field is a consistent theme across the literature (Benhar, 2009; Caldarella, Page, & Gunter, 2012; Jeloudar & Yunus, 2011).

Knowing that classroom management is a major area of struggle for many American teachers, however, is not enough. In terms of pragmatism, the important thing to determine is how students are acting in order to know how teachers can effectively respond to those actions. Erdogan *et al.* (2010) classified the disruptive behaviors they noticed in their study into six main categories: "(1) lack of motivation, (2) rule and routines breaking, (3) lack of infrastructure, (4) ineffective time management, (5) classroom environment, and (6) lack of classroom interaction" (p. 887). Certainly almost every teacher can relate to one if not almost all of these areas being a challenge in the modern secondary classroom. While this is certainly a detailed, well-rounded list, one must not be fooled into thinking that classroom discipline issues can be summed up by this short list of disruptive behaviors. On the contrary, disruptive behaviors have roots that go much deeper.

The discipline gap.

A short list of discipline problems is complicated by the steadily growing body of literature on the disproportionately low amount of punitive discipline exacted upon Caucasians as on minorities, specifically African-Americans (Skiba, Michael, Nardo & Peterson, 2002). Skiba *et al.* (2002) report the consistency of a disproportionate amount of school suspensions for African-Americans, citing at least 15 other studies. They also argue that there is a qualitative difference in the discipline African-American students receive. Whereas their Caucasian classmates are likely to receive more mild discipline, Skiba *et al.* (2002) argue that African-

Americans are much more likely to receive corporal punishment and other, more punitive discipline tactics.

Every study, however, does not produce these results. Citing literature including Skiba *et al.* (2002), Butler, Lewis, Moore, and Scott (2012) studied a large, urban school district in the Midwest. While they claimed to be looking for non-traditional factors that might be predictors of a disproportionate amount of discipline, they also looked at race and socioeconomic status. They found that "race and socioeconomic status were *not* [emphasis added] statistically significant predictors" (p. 19). Nevertheless, governmental agencies have begun changing their policies, specifically due to these studies like Skiba *et al.* (2002). California, for instance, recently changed their education code regarding offenses for which students can be suspended and/or expelled (Alejo *et al.*, 2014). Specifically citing research on the discipline gap between Caucasians and African-Americans (Rodriguez, 2013), the bill eliminates teachers' and administrators' authority "to suspend a pupil…[and] to recommend for expulsion a pupil…for disrupting school activities or otherwise willfully defying the valid autorithy of those school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties" (Alejo *et al.*, 2014, para. 3).

When one examines the research for the discipline gap between Caucasian and African-American students, the question is not whether one exists. While there is some debate over the issue, albeit a very one-sided debate, the reality remains that students come to teachers from all different walks of life. At the end of the day, teachers are responsible for having taught all students in their classes. To the extent that disruptions and aberrant behaviors get in the way of that, it is teachers' responsibility to manage the classroom well no matter the skin color of the student disrupting the class. To do so requires strategic implementation of the most effective classroom management strategies known. The reality is that no one system is going to be the

catch-all that will magically eradicate all behavior problems, however. On the contrary, the literature clearly indicates that an improvement in classroom management and behavior is a mentality rather than a program.

Effective strategies in the current American classroom.

With the reality in mind that students misbehave, any good teacher would desire to determine the strategies that can be used to combat those behaviors. The literature, however, pointed more to a *mentality* than a strategy. The mentality involves a move away from more traditional forms of discipline. It is considered traditional to use punitive discipline such as detention, in-school-suspension, out-of-school-suspension, and expulsion (Robinson, 1989). One thing that is very clear from research, however, is that these traditional methods are largely ineffective (Marzano, Gaddy, Foseid, Foseid, & Marzano, 2005; Robinson, 1989). Of course, in order to determine effectiveness, one must know what the end goal is. If the goal is simply to remove the student from the classroom, obviously expulsion is an effective strategy. The reality is that there *are* situations in which that truly is the teacher's goal. So, it becomes necessary to clarify that these strategies are considered ineffective by many researchers in that they do not properly address the problem behavior in such a way as to keep it from happening in the future (Oliver & Reschly, 2007). In fact, in Kenya where the rules for disciplining students are more lax than America, it is evident that punitive measures are not effective for changing behavior. One student reported "that 'manual labour is just a way of satisfying my wish when I feel tired in class, I can simply make noise so that I go out. Likewise, suspension is just a chit for going out'" (Ajowi & Omboto, 2013, p. 129). Traditional, punitive interventions do not bring about effective change in most students as compared to more judicious methods (Adams, 2013). If this is the case, pensive teachers will ask themselves what strategies *are* effective for actually changing

students' behavior for the better. This is something the past and present body of literature directly addresses.

The move from punitive to non-punitive classroom management.

Attempting to answer this question about which strategies are effective for changing students' behaviors, Roache and Ramon (2011) classify teachers' classroom management styles into two categories: coercive and relationship-based. Coercive classroom management styles are characterized by teachers who yell, use sarcasm, put down students, and impose punishments on the whole class when one student is bad (Roache & Ramon, 2011). Relationship-based classroom management styles are characterized by discussion, dropping hints to students concerning their misbehavior, and putting the onus back on the students to evaluate their own behavior, while not allowing students to get away with misbehavior (Roache & Ramon, 2011).

While most teachers would have exhibited a more coercive classroom in decades past, the relationship-based classroom has become the new mentality amongst many teachers and is becoming more and more prevalent (Allman & Slate, 2012; Skinner, 1969). Skinner (1969) recognized this shift in classroom management mentality and applauded it while also cautioning future teachers. He explained that teachers often drive home the importance of education for making more money in life while conveniently forgetting the fact that many blue collar jobs earn a more decent living than the average teacher salary (Skinner, 1969). Even if this were not the case, he recognized that the benefits of a great education are much too far off for the average secondary student to be a motivating factor, but concluded:

> All these measures [of gold stars, high marks, etc.] fail because they do not give the student adequate reasons for studying and learning. Punishment gave him a reason (we

> can say that for it), but if we are to avoid unwanted by-products, we must find non-punitive forms. It is not an impossible assignment (Skinner, 1969, pp. 93-94).

Skinner (1969) recognized the need for non-coercive, non-punitive methods of classroom management. He also recognized that this change in mentality would require some serious thought outside the system in which most teachers were accustomed to thinking. In the years since he uttered these words, many teachers have been hard at work, devising strategies for classroom management that are non-coercive and non-punitive. The body of literature on this topic is now quite vast. As compared to the punitive classroom management systems of the past, current practice regarding classroom management often includes proactive, rather than reactive measures (Rahman *et al.,* 2010). Furthermore, non-punitive classroom management requires a good relationship between the teacher and the student (Rahman *et al.*, 2010; Roache & Ramon, 2011).

Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS).

One of the more recent developments in this evolution of classroom management away from punitive methods and toward non-punitive strategies is a program called Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS). While no program is the final solution, this program was developed in the 1980s and has since been refined, adjusted, and individualized for over 18,000 schools nationwide (Alter & Vlasak, 2014; Shah, 2012). It is a program which focuses on three overarching concepts. First, it consists of determining where students' behaviors fall in the system's three-tiered intervention pyramid. In this schematic, 80% of the students are said to fall in the lower majority of the pyramid where the school-wide PBIS intervention ought to be effective in curbing their misbehavior. Of the 20% remaining, the majority (15%) will need a secondary intervention. This might consist of specialized group supports and interventions.

Finally, there will be 5% of the students who need a tertiary intervention. This would consist of specialized, individualized intervention (Alter & Vlasak, 2014; Bradshaw *et al.*, 2012; Netzel & Eber, 2003; Simonsen & Sugai, 2013).

The second component of PBIS consists of taking time from an already full instructional day to intentionally teach students what behaviors are and are not acceptable in school (Netzel & Eber, 2003). Emphasis is placed on each area of school. For instance, students are explicitly taught what acceptable behavior looks like in the classroom, at the lunch tables, in the locker room, during passing period, etc. Despite the time that this direct behavior instruction takes away from teaching core content, "'You don't have time not to teach this,' said Katherine Lewis, a school climate specialist for the 45,000-student Charleston County district" (Shah, 2012, p. 1). The program does not end with direct instruction for students concerning proper behavior, though. These behaviors are intentionally reinforced through rewards and compliments when students display the desired actions (Shah, 2012). The reality, however, is that these positive rewards and incentives will not always be sufficient for every student. This is where the "I" in PBIS becomes evident. Since a small portion of students will not always respond to the Positive Behavior Supports, the program includes an intervention component. Rather than being scripted, however, in PBIS interventions are creative and student-focused. For example, one student in a South Carolina district who kept blurting out responses whether it was his turn or not, found himself in need of such an intervention (Shah, 2012). He was given a large stack of sticky notes and told that he was allowed three comments per class after which he was able to write any further comments down on a sticky note and pass it to his teacher (Shah, 2012).

The third and final component of PBIS implementation consists of evaluating the data that the program produces in an effort to always be improving (Netzel & Eber, 2003). During

this process, teachers evaluate each and every PBIS system (whether on an individual, classroom, or whole school setting) and evaluate whether those systems are in place and effective. This is certainly something that would happen at the end of a school year, but it also occurs throughout the school year as well, especially in the first year(s) of implementation.

As previously mentioned, PBIS has been incorporated in over 18,000 schools nationwide. The mere fact that PBIS has been implemented in tens of thousands of schools, however, is not sufficient reason to prefer it as a method of changing or managing student behavior. Rather, the system ought to stand or fall on its effectiveness or lack thereof. This effectiveness, however, can be measured in multiple ways. Knowles (2014), for instance, endeavored to determine if any academic benefits could be realized from the implementation of School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS). While there were not statistically significant results to indicate that the implementation of SWPBIS increased academic achievement on the school-wide level, the study revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the achievement of minority students as compared to their classmates (Knowles, 2014).

Certainly, the most obvious way in which one might realize the effects of PBIS can be measured in improved student behavior. Research has shown that this system has, indeed, been effective in improving student behavior (Arnold, 2012; Power, 2012). This is the most likely reason why so many schools have implemented SWPBIS. Power (2012) found SWPBIS to have a significant effect on behavior in certain disciplinary categories. Whereas there was no significant decrease in the number of In School Suspensions (ISS) or Out of School Suspensions (OSS), Power (2012) found that the implementation of SWPBIS yielded statistically significant results regarding the reduction of tardy referrals and Office Discipline Referrals (ODR) across the whole school as well as amongst chronically misbehaving students. Arnold (2012) agrees

with this research in reporting that the amount of discipline referrals received by students at SWPBIS schools in her study were statistically significantly fewer than their non-SWPBIS counterparts.

Conclusions about the history and current state of American classroom management.

It is evident from the body of literature that classroom management is a very important component of American education. It is clear that maintaining this classroom management was much easier in centuries and decades past. From the Colonial period to the 19th century, teachers were afforded the ability to act *in loco parentis* with respect to disciplining students. As such, they disciplined as they saw fit on an individual, quasi-parent level. With the 20th century came court cases which enforced students' rights in the classroom, and consequently stripped teachers of rights that aided in classroom management. This trend in American educational law did not live in isolation, however. Rather, it developed hand-in-hand with a changing mentality amongst educators that classroom discipline ought to be sought with less punitive and less coercive methods. The state of American education today is one in which these less punitive, less coercive methods reign supreme. While there are theoretically as many programs and systems to implement this less punitive, less coercive style of classroom management as there are teachers in the country, the reality is that there is one system that is preferred by most. That system is called PBIS and it has proven to be most effective at maintaining school-wide discipline while not focusing on coercion and punitive methods of classroom management.

Technology

Virtually no one would deny the increasing presence of technology in the typical K-12 classroom in America. It is hard to imagine that only thirty years ago the word "file" in an

educational setting would most likely have referred to a physical, manila object in a filing cabinet. Whereas only thirty years ago technology in a classroom consisted of having an overhead projector, now classrooms are filled with SMART Boards, LCD projectors, document cameras, iPads, laptops, tablets, and more. As a testament to this shift, "in 2008 the United States provided $273 million funding to secondary and high schools to support the development and integration of educational technology into classroom instruction" (Manochehri & Sharif, 2010, p. 32). With all this change in education in the last thirty years or so, it is important not simply to change for the sake of change, but to evaluate the changes that have taken place. In the subsequent sections, I detailed the findings from the literature regarding teachers' comfort levels with technology, the benefits and drawbacks of its integration into the classroom, and some of the current technologies that are being used in American classrooms.

Teachers' comfort levels with technology.

The influx of technology in the typical K-12 classroom has been met with an influx in research concerning this technology. Researchers have attempted to answer questions pointed at the effectiveness of technology in the classroom, the cost associated with it, the effects (whether positive or negative) on students being around it so often, and much more. One of the common themes arising from this research is the need for teachers to be well-versed in technology before being able to use it effectively (Hughes, 2005; Pierson, 2001; Sugar & Slagter van Tryon, 2014; Thielst, 2007). Even though, as mentioned previously, teachers are increasingly being expected to incorporate technology into the classroom, the reality is that it is not safe to assume that all teachers have the necessary skills to perform technologically (Thielst, 2007).

If this is the case, it is obvious that there will need to be some instruction in which teachers are exposed to technologies. This calls for not simply introducing teachers to technology

through a crash-course, one hour session, but actually taking time to provide ongoing, continuous professional development opportunities (Sugar & Slagter van Tryon, 2014). The goal of these professional development trainings is that teacher-learners would become comfortable with the technology at hand, and in so doing, would be more likely to see the benefit of using technology in the classroom as they move forward (Hughes, 2005). Only then would it truly be fair to require teachers to implement technology in their classrooms.

Although there is clearly a need for technology instruction for educators, many teachers, either willingly or not, do in fact incorporate technology with fidelity. Perera (2008) found teachers who used technology for a great many different strategies in every part of instruction. Nevertheless, the extent to which the technology is incorporated is important for determining if it is effective. After studying technology integration in multiple classrooms taught by both veteran and novice teachers alike, Pierson (2001) concluded the following:

> Technology in the hands of a merely adequate teacher will lack the experienced and thoughtful motivation necessary to embed it within a context of sound teaching practices. Conversely, technology in the hands of an exemplary teacher will not necessarily result in integrated and meaningful use….True integration can only be understood as the intersection of multiple types of teacher knowledge and, therefore, is likely as rare as expertise. (p. 427)

As such, it is clear that technology in and of itself is not the solution. Rather, as previously mentioned, technology must be coupled with appropriate, continued professional development opportunities aimed at training teachers to use it effectively (Hughes, 2005; Pierson, 2001; Sugar & Slagter van Tryon, 2014; Thielst, 2007).

One must also recognize, however, that no matter how much training is provided to teachers on different technologies, some teachers will simply be unwilling to incorporate technology into their classrooms. Roach (2010) found that many teachers simply do not care to use technology in the classroom. Perhaps one of the reasons for this is that some teachers are adverse to the idea of it becoming a requirement of them. Some states have already begun adding technological components to their teacher evaluation forms while others are in the process of doing so. The State of Michigan for instance, has called for school districts to "be encouraged to include technological competency as an aspect of teacher hiring and evaluation" (Michigan State Department of Education, 2000a, p. 28). While not always handed down from the state government as an initiative, incorporation of technology is still taking place. Individual school districts are starting to include it on their evaluations (McInnis, 2002; Whale, 2006).

In light of this opposition by some to technological integration, any professional development centering on technology integration in the classroom ought to also be focused on convincing teachers of its importance—not as a result of a mandate, but with a focus on what is best for students. The good news is that there is a litany of research focused on the importance of technological integration in classrooms in order to improve student achievement.

Benefits of technology integration.

Some of the benefits that educational technologies have brought are an "increased student achievement, enhanced student self-concept and attitude about learning, and improved interaction involving educators and students in the learning environment" (Effectiveness of Technology, 2001, p. 62). One of the reasons for this increase in favorable learning outcomes as a result of integrating technology is the fact that today's learners (especially in the K-12 setting) are accustomed to using technology (Aviles & Eastman, 2012; Debevec, Shih, & Kashyap, 2006;

Göl, 2012). As such, information becomes more accessible to them with the increase in technological use. Nevertheless, using technology simply for the sake of using technology is not sufficient (Aviles & Eastman, 2012). Rather, it must be focused on and directly related to the learning objectives.

If research shows that the use of technology in the educational setting helps today's students, then the pensive educator will ask how this happens. What factors contribute to this reality? One of these factors is outlined by Aviles and Eastman (2012), who indicate that research is clear on the fact that technology use in the classroom helps students to be more engaged. This engagement then leads to active learning strategies, which result in higher academic achievement (Aviles & Eastman, 2012).

Another factor that affects how today's students achieve better through the integration of technology is due to the reality that many students are visual learners. Though this may be directly connected to the fact that students are around technology so much from birth, research shows that the use of technology helps students who are visually oriented, when compared to more traditional methods such as lecturing (Debevec *et al.*, 2006).

Some have taken technological integration, however, beyond a simple tool to aid in student achievement. Indeed, some have gone so far as to espouse that the ability to use and interact with technology is a fundamental aspect of literacy for today's students (Turner, Hoeltzel, & Li, 2010). Without negating the need for students to be literate in the traditional sense, these authors take literacy to the next level by claiming that students need to be able to understand and interact with technology. According to these researchers, an inability to do so in the modern world is almost tantamount to not being able to read! They espouse that being

familiar with technology is a vital skill without which students cannot be successful in the modern world.

Therefore, there are many different benefits that can be realized from the integration of technology into the classroom. One of the most important benefits of technology integration must be the effect it has on academic achievement. Since technology integration often results in higher student engagement levels (Aviles & Eastman, 2012), one often finds that academic achievement rises with the rise in technological integration. This may be due, at least in part, to the fact that many of today's students are used to high levels of visual stimulation and, as such, find technology integration to be a more interesting (or, perhaps natural) way to learn. Some might argue, however, that the most important benefit that can be realized from technological integration in the classroom is the technological literacy that results. In a world that is becoming increasingly technologically driven, the skills that students learn with more exposure to technology in the classroom are likely to reap benefits for years to come—both individually for the student and corporately for society at large.

Drawbacks to technology integration.

While it is evident that much can be said for the benefits of integrating technology into the American classroom, some researchers have found some drawbacks to its integration. Some obvious drawbacks would include the infrastructure and economic issues. As previously mentioned, "in 2008 the United States provided $273 million funding to secondary and high schools to support the development and integration of educational technology into classroom instruction" (Manochehri & Sharif, 2010, p. 32). When one thinks about all the other benefits that could be realized from spending hundreds of millions of dollars on other areas of education, it becomes a great task to find justification for this money being spent on technology.

Even more important, however, is the educational setbacks. These can be realized in a number of ways. First, one cannot overemphasize the need for good teachers. Even with all that technology has to offer, if the learning experiences are not packaged, displayed, and disseminated the appropriate way, technology in and of itself will not bring about higher learning (Aviles & Eastman, 2012). As such, one might argue that it is not the technology itself that improves student achievement, but the craft of classroom teachers using all tools necessary to bring about their students' learning. As such, one might make a case for not needing so much technology, since the teacher is the one who creates a quality learning environment or not. If this is true, then the infrastructure and economic concerns are all the more prevalent and real. For instance, why not simply take all the money being invested in technology and divert it to the development of quality teachers who will use whatever tools necessary to bring about student learning? While some might easily argue these claims against technology integration, they are issues that ought to be discussed, nonetheless. One of the responses for technology's detractors is obviously the benefits that those technologies bring. With that in mind, it is important to look at what technologies are currently being used in American classrooms.

Current technologies used for classroom management.

With the increase in the use of technology both in the nation generally and in K-12 classrooms in particular has come a rise in technologies that relate specifically to American classroom education and even more specifically to classroom management. These technologies range in complexity from simply being randomizers that allow all students to be called just as frequently as other students, to noise barometers, seating arrangers, and full classroom management programs. In this section I will investigate some of the prominent technologies designed for classroom management that are currently being used in American classrooms.

Doing so will orient the reader to the current classroom management technologies employed in American classrooms in order to see the role that ClassDojo plays within the broader classroom management technology landscape.

Interactive white boards.

The use of interactive white boards has become very popular in the last decade or so. Also sometimes referred to as SMART Boards after one of the main manufacturers, interactive white boards are screens that are usually placed in the front of the classroom. These screens are touch-sensitive and an image is projected onto them with which students and teachers may interact. This image can either be projected from a stand-alone projector or one that is connected to the interactive white board. While interactive white boards are often chosen for academic reasons rather than behavioral ones, some educators believe that using them instead of a more traditional white board allows students the ability to interact more with their learning, which increases student engagement, and therefore student behavior. Indeed, Morgan (2008) studied this common belief and found it to be true. In her quasi-experimental study she found that there was a positive correlation between the use of interactive white boards and student behavior and that this remained true across both genders and all ethnicities studied (Morgan, 2008).

Too Noisy.

One of the more simple technologies for classroom management that is being used in American classrooms is “Too Noisy.” This is an app for smartphones. It uses the microphone in the smartphone to constantly assess the level of background noise in the room. A preset acceptable noise level can be programmed. Any time the noise level in a classroom exceeds this preset limit for three seconds or longer the phone sets off an alarm and adds one to the built-in counter. This way the teacher can keep track of how many times the class was too noisy. Points

can then be assessed or deducted from the class in relation to how many times they were too noisy. This is a very passive way to enforce discipline in a classroom as the app seems to do most of the work of correcting students' behaviors on its own ("Too Noisy," 2012).

Smart Seat.

Smart Seat is an app that teachers can use to create a seating chart, learn students' names, organize them according to the made seating chart, and call on students within the seating chart randomly. Designed primarily for a tablet, Smart Seat allows a teacher to start by rearranging a diagram of desks on the app to mimic the layout of the classroom. Teachers can then attach students' names and/or pictures to each desk. If and when students are acting up and need to move to a new location in the classroom, the teacher simply needs to drag the student's name/picture to another desk and a new seating chart is created. This technology also has the added feature of being able to call on students' randomly so that all students are engaged and aware of their responsibility to be attentive ("Smart Seat App," 2014).

Socrative.

Socrative is a "smart student response system" ("Engage the Class", 2014). It works on virtually any mobile device, including laptops. The program is designed with a few different goals in mind. Students can take quizzes, participate in "ticket out the door" activities, and play games (such as review games). Teachers can make quizzes of all different lengths and question types. Students submit answers through their personal mobile device. This technology relates to classroom management in that it is directed toward getting students more engaged and on task. Doing so is intended to result in students being less apt to act in disruptive ways because they are engaged in the content at hand ("Engage the Class", 2014).

ClassDojo.

ClassDojo is an online program that is primarily meant to reward and punish students for good and bad behavior, respectively. Teachers upload students' names to the system and students choose an avatar (monster) to represent them. The program comes with a handful of good and bad behaviors preselected, though teachers may change them at will. Whenever a student demonstrates a good behavior, the teacher taps their name, usually on a mobile device, and taps the name of that behavior. This results in the student receiving a positive point. When a student demonstrates an undesirable behavior, however, the teacher taps their name and that undesirable behavior. This results in the student receiving a negative point. These point values can be displayed in a classroom on either a projector screen or TV. Weekly reports are automatically sent to parents' email addresses with a color-coded report of the behaviors their student demonstrated that week, although teachers can do this more or less frequently. Another feature included in ClassDojo is the ability to take attendance for those on the roster electronically. Teachers can select a student's name and mark them absent or tardy. Still another feature is the ability to call on students randomly by tapping a random button or shaking a tablet or smartphone ("ClassDojo," 2014).

Of all these technologies currently being used in the American classroom, ClassDojo seems to be the most robust and versatile. It allows teachers to call on students randomly, to take their attendance electronically, and most of all to manage a classroom with positive and negative points. I personally used ClassDojo in my classroom for two years and felt that it was beneficial in effectively managing a middle school classroom. As such, I chose to study this technology to determine what were the perceptions of other teachers regarding this technology.

Summary

There are at least two major theories influencing this research. First, B. F. Skinner's operant conditioning was pivotal for this study. ClassDojo was actually designed as a classroom management technology based on the principles of operant conditioning (ClassDojo, 2014). Just as Skinner (1938) believed a reinforcement (whether positive or negative) could influence how individuals act in the future, so ClassDojo was designed as a classroom management tool designed to reinforce students' behaviors in order to get them to repeat behaviors that earn positive reinforcements and refrain from ones that earn negative reinforcements. The study was also influenced by Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. Fitting within the scope of Social Learning Theory, Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory espouses that students are not *tabula rasa*—blank slates. Rather, even infants can begin to interact with their environment. As children interact with their environment, and specifically as they watch how older children and adults act, they begin to mimic behaviors. As ClassDojo is used in the classroom, students begin to notice how their fellow classmates act and their behaviors change as a result of their noticing social situations and thinking through whether they desire to mimic those traits or not.

While Skinner's operant conditioning and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory both influenced this research, ultimately the study was focused on ClassDojo and the perceptions of teachers and students regarding its effectiveness. As such, two main areas of literature were investigated. First, I investigated the body of literature regarding classroom management. It became clear that classroom management is not something only first year teachers deal with. Rather, even veteran teachers find themselves struggling with its proper implementation. Classroom management strategies are so important that many teachers who are not effective at it end up leaving the profession. Classroom management strategies were classified into two main

categories: coercive and relationship-based (Roache & Ramon, 2011). According to the body of literature, relationship-based systems are to be preferred and include dropping hints to students and having discussions about misbehavior rather than being punitive and putting students down.

Next, I investigated the body of literature pertaining to technology. Pointing out the fact that much has changed in the last few decades with regard to the types of tools that are used in the classroom, it became necessary to focus in on some of the less noticeable effects of this shift. As such, I investigated both the benefits and drawbacks to the integration of technology in the American classroom. One potential benefit is that research shows students are more engaged when technology is effectively used in the classroom (Aviles & Eastman, 2012). This is obviously a huge advantage, but some will say that it comes at too great a financial cost. One potential drawback is the fact that technology integration or technological literacy is creeping its way into teachers' evaluations. This is happening both on a state government level and individual districts. Finally, I examined current technologies that were prevalent in American classrooms in an effort to understand the benefits that can be realized by using these technologies. All of this literature points to the importance of a study that investigates a technology to determine if it is a viable option for both managing a classroom and fulfilling increasing technological requirements, while improving student achievement.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

This chapter details the methods used for conducting this research. The methodology for the study followed a transcendental phenomenological design as laid forth by Moustakas (1994). The purpose of the study was to understand how the participants perceived the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool. I accomplished this by researching 15 participants. Three were teachers, selected by means of purposeful, convenience sampling using a quantitative survey. Twelve participants were those teachers' students, selected based on purposeful, snowball sampling. These 12 participants came from three different middle schools in a particular school district in Southern California with over 20,000 students. The procedures for collecting and analyzing the data were consistent with those laid forth by Moustakas (1994). The means by which I collected the data was through observations, interviews, and focus groups. Measures were taken as subsequently described to respond to issues of trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

Design

Creswell (2013) explains that in phenomenological research designs, one attempts to understand and explain what participants have experienced with regard to a certain phenomenon. Furthermore, they attempt to reduce all participants' lived experiences to a simple explanation of the "essence" of the phenomenon. In his monumental work, Moustakas (1994) lays forth a model for arriving at this essence of the phenomenon. He terms it transcendental phenomenology. In this book, he states that "transcendental phenomenology is a scientific study of the appearance of things, of phenomena just as we see them and as they appear to us in consciousness" (p. 49). The design of this study was transcendental in that I attempted to perceive the phenomenon as

experienced by the participants for the first time through a process known as epoche; it was phenomenological in that it only focused on the way things appeared to the subjects in the study (Moustakas, 1994).

The phenomenon under study was the perception of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to describe the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool for three middle school classrooms at Cardinal Unified School District (pseudonym).

I believe this research design was the most beneficial for accomplishing this purpose for a few reasons. First, Creswell (2013) notes that phenomenological research is best meant for problems "in which it is important to understand several individuals' common or shared experiences of a phenomenon" (p. 81). Since I desired to understand to what degree a broad spectrum of teachers and students perceived ClassDojo to be effective, a phenomenological study was appropriate. The reason that a transcendental phenomenological approach was necessary was because of my previous experience with ClassDojo. I had implemented ClassDojo in my middle school math classroom for about two years. In a transcendental phenomenological study one brackets out his personal experiences with a phenomenon through a process known as epoche (Moustakas, 1994). Employing a transcendental phenomenological research design allowed me to bracket out my previous personal experience with ClassDojo and to see the phenomenon through the lives of the participants as if for the first time.

Research Questions

Moustakas (1994) argues that "the challenge [of phenomenological research] is to explicate the phenomenon in terms of its constituents and possible meanings, thus discerning the

features of consciousness and arriving at an understanding of the essences of the experience" (p. 49). It is clear that phenomenological research is focused primarily on understanding participants' experiences of a certain phenomenon and boiling down their statements to the essence of the phenomenon. While there is a good deal of research that has been done on classroom management, there is a gap in the literature regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as demonstrated previously. The following research questions were designed in order to attempt to understand how the participants in this study perceived their experiences with ClassDojo:

Research Question One: How do teachers and students perceive the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool?

Research Question Two: How do teachers and students perceive the implementation of ClassDojo to influence student achievement?

Research Question Three: What technology and/or other resources do teachers and students perceive as necessary for the most effective implementation of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool?

Research Question Four: What previous technological experience(s) do teachers perceive as necessary to effectively implement ClassDojo?

Research Question Five: How do teachers perceive their use of ClassDojo to influence how they are viewed by administration with regard to using technology in the classroom?

Setting

The overall setting of this study was all middle schools in a school district in Southern California with over 20,000 students. According to the California Department of Education (2014) this district was comprised of students from three main ethnicities. Of the more than 20,000 students 53% were Hispanic, 32% Caucasian, and 8% were African-Americans. Over the

past three school years, the district had not made Adequate Yearly Progress (California Department of Education, 2014) according to federal standards. In fact, each year they had been meeting fewer and fewer of the 46 criteria necessary to make AYP. The district had been in Program Improvement (PI) for almost 10 years (California Department of Education, 2014).

While the overall setting for this study was every middle school in the district as mentioned previously, once I conducted the quantitative survey I only selected three teacher participants who met the parameters of the purposeful sampling. Incidentally, the three teacher participants came from two different school sites within the district. The teachers perceived these schools as representing the two extremes within the district regarding behavior and discipline of students. While this was beneficial for transferability, there were two comprehensive middle schools not represented in the chosen participant pool. I chose this particular school district because the students came from very diverse backgrounds. This was important as it aided in the transferability of the study.

Participants

The participants for this study included three teachers and 12 students for a total of 15 participants. The procedures for determining the participants consisted of a combination of purposeful, convenience, and snowball sampling. Creswell (2013) mentions that purposeful sampling should be used when one wants to intentionally select participants for a specific reason, such as the fact that they have all experienced a particular phenomenon. In the first stage of data collection I surveyed all middle school teachers within a school district in Southern California having more than 20,000 students. This survey was meant to determine the pool from which I might draw my participants for the study. This pool consisted of any and all teachers that met the criteria of the purposeful sampling. The criteria were three-fold and were determined by

quantitative questions. These questions consisted of yes/no and multiple choice answers (Wright, Burnham, Inman, & Ogorchock, 2009). First, participants had to be in a general education, middle school classroom due to the fact that I was interested in understanding how these particular teachers and students perceived the effectiveness of ClassDojo. Second, teachers had to have used ClassDojo before. Finally, teachers had to be willing to be involved in the research.

From the survey I sent out, a pool of potential participants was solidified based on whether teachers met the qualifications of the criterion sampling. The criterion sampling proved effective in separating potential participants into two groups. Most of the respondents did not meet the criteria set forth for the study in that they were in a special education setting. These were arranged into one group, with potential participants that did meet the criteria as the other group. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) mention the need to "change from one sampling strategy to another as data collection progresses in order to meet multiple research interests and needs" (p. 185). As such, and in light of the fact that most potential participants did not meet the criteria set forth, I moved on to convenience sampling (Gall *et al.*, 2007). I selected the three teacher participants for this study based on this combination of criterion and convenience sampling as the study progressed (Gall *et al.*, 2007).

Once I had selected the three teachers, I employed purposeful, snowball sampling to determine the 12 students who would participate in the study. Creswell (2013) explains that in snowball sampling, one identifies participants by referral of other participants. Following this design, I asked each of the three participant teachers to choose one class period and divide their students into those who exercised consistent disruptive behaviors and those who did not. I selected two students from each of these two pools, resulting in four student participants for each teacher participant. These four participants were two students who exercised consistent

disruptive behaviors as well as two students who did not exercise consistent disruptive behaviors. By sampling this way, the study was more transferable in that I collected data from participants who had varied views on the importance of classroom management. My expectation that their views of classroom management would vary stemmed from the fact that the more disruptive students were not as likely to believe in the validity of rules (and, by extension, classroom management), whereas the less disruptive students were more likely to believe in the validity of rules (Gottfredson, 1986). I referred to this sampling technique as purposeful, snowball sampling. It was purposeful in that I chose the students based on meeting the criterion of being very disruptive or not very disruptive. It was snowball sampling in that their teachers referred them to me.

Procedures

I conducted this study according to Moustakas' methods for phenomenological reduction (1994). The methods in this type of research are as follows: (a) discover an important topic, (b) conduct a comprehensive literature review, (c) determine what to look for in potential co-researchers, (d) inform the co-researchers of the study and agree on logistics, (e) develop a set of appropriate questions, (f) collect data, normally through a long, face-to-face interview, and (g) organize and analyze the data (Moustakas, 1994). "The above methodological requirements may be organized in terms of Methods of Preparation, Methods of Collecting Data, and Methods of Organizing and Analyzing Data" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 104).

After determining the important topic to study and conducting a comprehensive literature review, I submitted my research plan to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) in order to seek approval to conduct the research. I received approval to move forward with this study from Liberty University's IRB (see Appendix A). In the Methods of Collecting Data phase, I informed

all the potential participants of the study and began to collect data. I developed a list of questions to ask the participants while allowing the questions to evolve and change from what I learned in the cycle of three observations. These observations greatly influenced and augmented the questions that I had planned for the interviews and focus groups. The series of observations allowed me to see ClassDojo as if for the first time. In every teacher participants' classroom, their implementation of ClassDojo was different than the way I had implemented it in mine. As such, these observations proved to be a great source for determining meaningful questions to ask during the interviews and focus groups.

When these questions were solidified, I conducted interviews with the teacher participants. I also conducted interviews and focus groups with the student participants. I then organized and analyzed the data in the data analysis section subsequently described.

The Researcher's Role

My role was to report the lived experiences of the participants as it related to the phenomenon under study. As I had two years of experience implementing ClassDojo as a middle school math teacher, it was important to bracket out any prior assumptions I had regarding the phenomenon under study. I did this through the process of phenomenological reduction as described by Moustakas (1994).

Data Collection

This study employed a transcendental phenomenological research design. The goal was to observe and report the phenomenon of the perception of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool. I employed various data collection strategies to ensure data triangulation. These strategies included a quantitative survey, observations, interviews, and focus groups. I continued to collect data until data saturation

occurred. This point was reached when no new themes were emerging from the data collection strategies.

Survey

In his discussion of pragmatism, Creswell (2013) argues that one who conducts qualitative research does not necessarily need to be limited to "traditional" qualitative data collection methods. Rather, he describes scenarios in which quantitative surveys are appropriate within a purely qualitative study (Creswell, 2013). With this in mind, the first step in data collection for this study was to distribute a quantitative survey to all middle school teachers in the Cardinal Unified School District (pseudonym). Creswell (2013) lists "elicitation methods" (p. 96) as one of the possible reasons for using quantitative surveys within a qualitative study. In this same vein of thought, I administered this survey solely for the purpose of determining which teachers met the criteria of the purposeful sampling. The survey contained questions that were meant to determine if the person filling it out was an eligible participant. Eligible participation was contingent upon the teacher being in a regular education, middle school setting, having used ClassDojo before, and being willing to participate in this study.

Observations

Creswell (2013) mentions the fact that observation is one of the key, landmark data collection methods in qualitative research. While this is true, it is necessary to be aware of the fact that the data collected by this method can, and likely will, be affected by the presence of another person in the classroom—the researcher. As such, it was necessary to take measures to limit this influence. These measures consisted of my gradual introduction into the classroom (Creswell, 2013), introduction to the class by their teacher (Merriam, 2009), and fitting into the

routines of the class so as not to cause much disturbance (Merriam, 2009). These methods will be discussed subsequently in further detail.

I conducted three scheduled observations in each classroom. This data collection method was appropriate for at least two reasons. First, it was important to understand the phenomenon in order to guide my development of questions for the participants. While I have some experience with the implementation of ClassDojo, one of the first steps in this research was for me to bracket out those personal experiences. In order to do this effectively, I needed to experience the implementation of ClassDojo as if for the first time. A cycle of observations allowed for that possibility.

Second, these observations allowed an opportunity to establish rapport with the participants whom I interviewed. This was necessary in order to limit the amount of influence my presence had upon the phenomenon. While I had already met the teachers through the process of selecting their student participants, before the observations my exposure to the student participants was basically limited to the explanation and collection of the informed consent and assent forms. Observations provided opportunities for these students to meet me and feel comfortable with me. I chose three observations for each classroom in order to allow the opportunity to gradually build this rapport.

There were at least four contacts that I had with the student participants. The first contact was to allow the teacher to introduce me to the class and let them know that I would be coming by occasionally to join their class. At this time, I also talked with the student participants and handed out the informed consent and assent forms. The remaining contacts in the whole class setting consisted of the three rounds of observations. In the first observation, I was a non-participatory observer. As such, my goal was for the students to virtually not even realize that I

was there. I sat in the back of the room taking field notes about what I observed, but did not interject or participate.

In the second observation I was a participant as an observer. Creswell (2013) claims that this environment may allow for the researcher to gain more of an insider's perspective as well as to observe the subjective data. The specifics of what I did in this role were dependent on the teachers' lesson plans and what their lesson looked like. It was agreed upon beforehand with the teacher. My being a participant as an observer ranged from roaming around from student group to student group, raising and answering questions, and showing a video of a personal experience that related to the content.

Finally, in the third observation, I planned to be a complete participant. The decision on whether to become a complete participant or to remain as a participant as observer, however, was something determined after the second observation (Creswell, 2013). This decision was made with input from the classroom teacher with a goal toward not making students uncomfortable. The goal of this decision-making process was to diminish the amount that the phenomenon was affected by my presence. I had hoped to be able to become a complete participant, though, because if I were able to do so I knew it would be helpful for getting more of an insider's perspective of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Since in each classroom the students felt comfortable with me, I did become a complete participant in the third observation for each class.

Going through these three rounds of observations brought the obvious benefit of being able to experience the phenomenon as if for the first time. Just as important, however, was the relationship that developed as a matter of conducting these observations. While being a complete participant on the first day would probably not be natural, it was important to get as close to this point as possible in order to build greater rapport (Creswell, 2013). Since this was successful, it

allowed for a more comfortable environment in which the student participants were willing to share about their lived experiences both in the interviews and focus groups.

During and directly after each observation, I recorded my field notes. I created an observation guide (see Appendix B) to organize my notes into two categories—descriptions and reflections. In the description section, I simply charted everything that happened in the classroom. In the reflection section, I was sure to include how I felt and what I thought about what was happening. Throughout the observations, I noted the layout of the room, the technology used to implement ClassDojo, and the interactions of the students in the classroom with fellow students as well as their teacher. I keyed in on facial expressions and body language of the teacher when students were disruptive. I also keyed in on facial expressions and body language of the students when they received points (whether positive or negative) through ClassDojo.

As previously stated, the observations were conducted with two main goals in mind. First, I hoped to establish rapport with the participants in order to give them the opportunity to become comfortable with me and trust me when sharing in the interviews and focus groups. Second, I hoped to re-experience the phenomenon of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool as if for the first time—a necessary component of transcendental phenomenology. While I had planned a series of three observations, collecting data in this form may have continued to offer rich new information through the third observation. If this were the case, I would have been sure to continue observing until this collection strategy did not produce any new data. Since no new data emerged from this data collection method, however, I moved on to participant interviews.

Interviews

According to Moustakas (1994), "typically in the phenomenological investigation the long interview is the method through which data is collected on the topic and question" (p. 114). With this in mind, I employed semi-structured interviews as my next data collection method. This was one of the two main methods from which I gleaned data for this study. These interviews took place with all the participants. The questions for these interviews were all based around three concepts: (a) understanding how effective they perceived ClassDojo to be both as a classroom management tool and as an influence on student achievement, (b) understanding what prior experiences and resources they felt were necessary to properly implement ClassDojo, and (c) understanding how teachers perceived their use of ClassDojo to affect how they were viewed by their administrators.

Using the research questions as a basis, I developed a list of about 10 to 15 interview questions before conducting any research. After IRB approval, however, I was able to go into the classrooms of the teacher participants and observe three class periods for each teacher. This time was rich with new experiences for me regarding ClassDojo and raised a number of questions about how teachers use ClassDojo as well as how they view it. As such, the number and quality of the interview questions evolved greatly during the observation phase. As suggested by Creswell (2013), I also created an interview guide (see Appendix C) to aid in the organization of my note-taking as well as to assist in making sure I did not forget any questions and gleaned as much data as possible. In the end, I asked the following 27 questions of the teacher participants (along with follow-up and probing questions as necessary):

1. If someone asked you what ClassDojo is, what would you tell them?
2. How did you hear about ClassDojo?

3. How long have you been using ClassDojo?
4. What made you first want to try using it?
5. What behaviors do your students receive ClassDojo points for?
    - Can a student receive positive and/or negative points?
6. Do students in your classroom receive intrinsic reward from ClassDojo or do you tie something extrinsic to it as well?
7. What technology do you currently use in the implementation of ClassDojo?
8. Do you believe ClassDojo helps a teacher manage a classroom?
    - Why do you think so?
    - Do you see this as the primary function of ClassDojo or a secondary one?
9. Do you think ClassDojo could be most effectively used as a classroom management tool if students were not able to see their points during class? Why?
    - What if they were not able to hear the sounds that it makes?
10. Do you think that the most effective use of ClassDojo would include students being able to see their points *and* hear the sounds that ClassDojo makes?
    - Why do you think this?
11. Does ClassDojo ever experience technical difficulties to the point that it almost seems useless to try to use it as compared to another classroom management technique or program?
12. Are there contexts (such as group work, lecture, individual seat work) in which using ClassDojo as a classroom management tool makes more or less sense than others?
    - Are there times/contexts in which you feel ClassDojo is not useful at all?

13. How, if at all, do you think that the giving of positive ClassDojo points affects student engagement?
    - How, if at all, does giving negative points affect student engagement?
14. How, if at all, do you think ClassDojo affects student achievement?
15. If you believe ClassDojo helps students achieve higher, is it a significantly higher achievement?
16. If you believe ClassDojo helps students achieve higher, why do you think so?
17. What technology do you think teachers need in order to use ClassDojo *most* effectively?
    - If teachers do not have this technology, can they still use ClassDojo well?
18. What previous technological experience does one need to use ClassDojo?
19. Can ClassDojo be as easily utilized with stationary technology (such as a desktop computer) as it can with mobile technology (such as a smartphone or tablet)?
    - Can it be used as *effectively* with stationary technology as it can with mobile technology?
20. What, if any, necessary preparation needs to be done before class (such as turning on a computer or signing into an app, etc.) in order to most effectively use ClassDojo?
    - How much time does that take?
21. How, if at all, do you think using ClassDojo influences how your administrators see you?
22. Does this belief have anything to do with why you started to use ClassDojo?
23. Does this belief have anything to do with why you continue to use ClassDojo?
24. Have you ever mentioned ClassDojo to a fellow teacher?
    - If so, what was your advice to them?

- If you have not mentioned it to another teacher, but you did today, what would you tell them? What would be your selling point to that teacher?

25. Do you ever forget to use ClassDojo?
    - If so, why do you think you forget?
    - Do you feel a void when you forget to use ClassDojo?
26. Do you think ClassDojo has any effect on your students other than behaviorally or academically?
    - If so, why do you think it has this effect?
27. Is there anything else I should know about how you view ClassDojo or how you implement it in your classroom that has not been covered?

My time spent observing how teachers used ClassDojo was not merely beneficial for the development of questions for the teacher interviews. Rather, a number of qualitative and quantitative improvements to the questions I prepared for students also came out of this experience. As a non-participant in the classroom at the beginning of the observation phase, it was easy to feel like a student, experiencing ClassDojo for the first time. On more than one occasion a teacher would award a student a positive point in ClassDojo without an image being projected to display who received the point or what behavior they exhibited to deserve earning the point. As a quasi-student, I felt very frustrated that I did not know who received the point or why they had. Experiences like this helped formulate questions that were used while interviewing students to see if that was a common experience that student participants face.

The interview questions for students were not only influenced by my experience in observing classrooms. One other adjustment to the questions I asked during interviews was the pilot tests that I conducted. I piloted the interview questions on two students. While I

intentionally tried to write interview questions at the participants' developmental level, in the pilot testing I found that some of the wording of my questions was too difficult for students to understand. This allowed an opportunity to reword questions in a better way so as to gain the richest data. In line with what Creswell (2013) suggests, I created an interview guide for the students as well (see Appendix D). This guide, though similar to the one for teachers, included a few changes, especially with regard to preliminary information I wanted to make the students aware of before starting to ask them questions. One of the main benefits of this interview guide was the organization that it offered for my note-taking. It also ensured that I did not forget to ask any students questions that would have uncovered important data. In the end, I asked the student participants the following 24 basic questions with follow-up and probing questions where necessary:

1. If someone asked you what ClassDojo is, what would you tell them?
2. Have you had other teachers that have used ClassDojo?
3. Would you say that you typically get positive points or negative points on ClassDojo?
    - If typically positive, have you *ever* got a negative point?
4. Do you like getting positive points? Do you want to get as many as you can? Why?
5. Do you dislike getting negative points? Why?
6. Why do you think your teacher uses ClassDojo?
7. Do you think ClassDojo helps a teacher keep control of a class?
    - Why do you think so?
8. Do you think a teacher can keep better control of a class when students are able to see their ClassDojo points during class? Why?

9. Do you think a teacher can keep better control of a class when students are able to hear the sounds that ClassDojo makes? Why?
10. Do you think ClassDojo would work as well if students could not see their points or hear the sounds that it makes?
    - Why do you think this?
11. Does ClassDojo ever not work well to the point that it almost seems useless to try to use it (such as with experiencing technical difficulties)?
12. Does ClassDojo help you or your classmates behave the best during a certain activity (such as group work, lecture, individual seat work)?
    - Are there certain activities when you feel ClassDojo is not useful at all?
13. Tell me about how you feel when you get a positive point in ClassDojo.
    - How do you act when you feel this way?
    - Do you think that feeling and/or acting that way affects the grades you get?
14. Tell me about how you feel when you get a negative point in ClassDojo.
    - How do you act when you feel this way?
    - Do you think that feeling and/or acting that way affects the grades you get?
15. Do you believe ClassDojo helps students do better in class (as far as learning stuff)?
    - If so, is it a big difference? Do you think ClassDojo helps you learn *a lot* better? Why?
    - If not, why do you think this is?
16. What technology do you think teachers need in order to use ClassDojo the best way possible?

- If less than ideal, can ClassDojo still be used well with the limited technology of the teacher?

17. What technology does your teacher use with ClassDojo right now?
18. How "techie" does a teacher need to be to use ClassDojo? What do they need to know how to do with technology? (Be prepared to explain "techie.")
    - If answer is "not much" or something similar, ask if just about anyone could do it.
19. Do you think it is better to use ClassDojo with technology that cannot be easily moved (like a desktop) or with mobile technology (like a tablet)? Why?
20. Do you think there is anything a teacher needs to do before class every day to get ready to use ClassDojo the best way possible?
    - If needed give some examples: (turning on a computer, signing into an app, etc.)
21. Have you ever talked about ClassDojo with another student who is not in this class?
    - If so, what did you tell them?
    - If not, pretend you were going to tell a friend about ClassDojo today. What would you say to them about it?
22. Does your teacher ever forget to use ClassDojo?
    - If so, why do you think your teacher forgets?
    - Does it feel like something is missing when your teacher forgets to use ClassDojo?
    - In those times, do you wish that your teacher would remember, or do you not care whether they use it or not?

23. We have talked about how ClassDojo helps you behave better/worse and how it does/does not help you do better in school. Do you think ClassDojo is good for anything else? (Take your time to think.)
    - If so, why do you think so?
24. Is there anything else I should know about how you feel about ClassDojo or how your teacher uses it?

The first two steps Creswell (2013) mentions regarding interviewing are deciding on the research questions and choosing those to be interviewed. I have already explained my procedures for completing these steps. The next step was to determine which type of interview would yield the best data (Creswell, 2013). I chose a semi-structured interview. One of the main reasons for choosing this type was the reality that the participants may offer information about the phenomenon that I had not anticipated. If this were the case, the questions that I planned might not have brought this valuable information out. A semi-structured interview allowed me the flexibility to pursue any information that the participants revealed that I had not previously anticipated, but that was relevant to the research questions. In this way I was able to work toward data saturation, ensuring that all the data that could possibly be uncovered, would be.

After these preliminary steps were completed, I conducted the interviews. One of the main considerations in this phase was to ensure that proper recording procedures were in place (Creswell, 2013). As such, I was sure to have two different audio recording devices so that if one failed the information would not be lost. I also developed an interview guide for the teachers (see Appendix C) as well as the students (see Appendix D), as suggested by Creswell (2013). This was done to structure where my notes would be taken and to ensure that data was not lost. Both of these considerations—the recording procedures and the interview guide—were tested along

with the questions themselves through pilot testing. This was done in order to determine the validity of the questions being asked as well as to learn about other themes that may occur which might inspire other questions of which I had not previously thought. These pilot tests were conducted with a teacher and students nearby to the participants so that their background and experiences were as similar as possible to that of the actual participants. In this way, I was able to glean the most beneficial information to inform my question choices for the actual interviews.

Regarding the interviews themselves, I was sure to choose locations comfortable to the participants and conducive to the interview protocols. When the participants arrived, I ensured that I had informed consent and assent (as necessary) before conducting the interview. During the interview, I read the questions I had already devised. If something relevant to the research questions arose or the participant did not give a complete answer, I asked follow-up questions as necessary.

After I had conducted the interviews and had compiled the data, I performed member checks. In this process I showed the participant the data I had from the interview. The point of those member checks was to ensure that what I had written regarding their experience of the phenomenon was accurate.

Focus Groups

Liang, Spencer, Brogan, and Corral (2008) noticed that the primary thing middle school and high school aged children care about regarding relationships with adults is trust and faithfulness. The participants in their study specifically mentioned the importance of adults being able to keep secrets (Liang *et al.*, 2008). Since the student participants in my study did not know me very well prior to the study and were of the age group that Liang *et al.* (2008) studied, it was quite possible that they would not expound on their experiences of the phenomenon in a one-on-

one interview. Basch (1987), however, claims that focus groups are a great data collection method for participants who are not likely to share or open up in an individual interview. As such, I conducted the final method of data collection by way of focus groups. There were three focus groups, comprised solely of the student participants from each teacher's class. Therefore, each focus group had four students. Two students were classified by their teacher as exercising consistent disruptive behaviors, while two were classified as not exercising consistent disruptive behaviors. It is important to note that I did not tell these students why they had been chosen for this focus group for fear of causing some of them harm when they realized that they had been classified by their teacher as behavior problems.

I asked the focus group a series of questions meant to answer two main items: (a) understanding how effective they perceived ClassDojo to be both as a classroom management tool and as an influence on student achievement and (b) understanding what resources and prior experiences they felt were necessary to properly implement ClassDojo. I created a focus group guide to structure where my notes would be taken and to ensure that data was not lost (see Appendix E). The questions were specifically tailored to adolescents. They were as follows:

1. If someone asked you what ClassDojo is, what would you tell them?
2. What typically happens with the points on ClassDojo?
3. Think back to a time when you got a few positive points. How did you feel?
4. Think back to a time when you got a few negative points. How did you feel?
5. Why do you think your teacher uses ClassDojo?
6. What is it about ClassDojo that helps a teacher keep control of a class?
7. If a teacher is using ClassDojo mainly to control a class, how important do you think it is for him/her to let students be able to see their ClassDojo points during class?

8. If a teacher is using ClassDojo mainly to control a class, how important do you think it is for him/her to let students be able to hear the ClassDojo sounds during class?
9. How well do you think ClassDojo would help a teacher control a class if students could not see their points or hear the sounds that it makes?
10. Can you think of a time when ClassDojo did not work well to the point that it almost seemed useless to try to use it (such as with experiencing technical difficulties)?
11. Does ClassDojo help you or your classmates behave the best during a certain activity (such as group work, lecture, individual seat work)?
    - Can you think of any activities when you feel ClassDojo was not useful at all?
12. Tell me about how you feel when you get a positive point in ClassDojo.
    - How do you act when you feel this way?
    - How, if at all, do you think that feeling and/or acting that way affects the grades you get?
13. Tell me about how you feel when you get a negative point in ClassDojo.
    - How do you act when you feel this way?
    - How, if at all, do you think that feeling and/or acting that way affects the grades you get?
14. How much, if at all, do you believe ClassDojo helps students do better in class (as far as learning stuff)?
15. What technology do you think teachers need in order to use ClassDojo the best way possible?
16. What is the minimum technology that a teacher would need to use ClassDojo at all?

17. How "techie" does a teacher need to be to use ClassDojo? What do they need to know how to do with technology? (Be prepared to explain "techie.")
    - If answer is "not much" or something similar, could just about anyone do it?
18. Imagine a scenario where ClassDojo is only being used with stationary technology (like a desktop). How does that classroom compare to a classroom that uses it with mobile technology (like a tablet)?
19. What do you think a teacher needs to do before class every day to get ready to use ClassDojo the best way possible?
    - If needed give some examples: (turning on a computer, signing into an app, etc.)
20. How do you feel when your teacher forgets to use ClassDojo?
21. We have talked about how ClassDojo helps you behave better/worse and how it does/does not help you do better in school. Do you think ClassDojo is good for anything else? (Take your time to think.)
22. Imagine you were to talk about ClassDojo with another student who is not in this class. What would you tell them about it?
23. Is there anything else I should know about how you feel about ClassDojo or how your teacher uses it?

As stated with regard to interviews, it was necessary to pursue data saturation in the focus groups. The format of the focus groups allowed discussion to take place so that room was left for individuals to speak up about information that was not directly tied to my pre-planned questions. The questions that I planned may not have brought out all the data that the participants had to share. As such, all facets of the phenomenon that the focus groups unveiled that were previously

unknown to the researcher were pursued. This phase of data collection continued until no new data surfaced and saturation had been reached.

Data Analysis

I used Moustakas' (1994) phenomenological reduction research methods. He summarized them into six steps: (a) horizonalization of data, (b) pointing out the unique qualities of the experience, (c) clustering into themes, (d) determining individual textural and structural descriptions, (e) determining composite textural and structural descriptions, and (f) synthesizing the meanings to determine the essence of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Following this model, I began with horizonalization in which I treated each and every statement of the participants equally without beginning to cluster themes or disregard repetitive statements. Next I determined which statements stood out amongst the others. Then I clustered multiple statements into common themes. I also comprised textural and structural descriptions for individuals followed by the group of participants at large. Finally I took the textural and structural descriptions that I had created to synthesize my findings into the essence of the phenomenon.

Trustworthiness

I employed data triangulation and member checks in order to ensure the credibility of this study. Data triangulation refers to the many different sources and methods from which I collected data. This was meant to ensure that the data was corroborated by other sources (Creswell, 2013). I intentionally designed this study to involve at least three different forms of data (quantitative survey, interviews, observations, and focus groups) in order to account for this consideration. Through a process known as member checking, researchers present their findings to participants to ensure that their analysis of the data fits with the participants' lived experiences

(Creswell, 2013). As a final measure for credibility, therefore, I employed member checks in an effort to ensure that the participants in this study agreed with my textural and structural descriptions.

External auditing involved an opportunity for an unbiased peer to review the research in order to point out any inconsistencies and/or evaluate the research process (Creswell, 2013). For my study, I arranged for a fellow researcher to evaluate my findings to ensure they were dependable. Regarding transferability, I used thick descriptive data in field notes and descriptions of interviews in order to paint a picture for my readers. This process involved my giving great detail to the descriptions of the atmosphere in which the research was conducted as well as the way in which the participants carried themselves (Creswell, 2013). The purpose of this was to allow "readers to transfer information to other settings and to determine whether the findings can be transferred 'because of shared characteristics'" (Creswell, 2013, p. 252). Finally, I used direct quotes of the participants rather than rephrasing their statements in order to ensure authenticity.

Ethical Considerations

One important ethical consideration for this study was the need for confidentiality. The participants were not anonymous to me in that I was meeting with them, interviewing them, and involving them in a focus group. As such, their information needed to remain confidential. Their identities did not go beyond me because some students were chosen specifically for the reason that their teacher classified them as exhibiting consistent disruptive behaviors. These students' names remained confidential due to the psychological harm that could be experienced if they knew their teacher had classified them this way. As such, all student data was secured with a lock (if physical) or a password (if electronic).

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to describe the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool for three middle school classrooms at Cardinal Unified School District (pseudonym). I collected data through classroom observations, interviews, and focus groups as previously described. The observations within classrooms allowed me to experience ClassDojo as if for the first time, since phenomenological reduction requires the bracketing out of one's personal experiences. These observations led to an evolution and revising of the questions I had planned for the interviews and focus groups as I was able to experience how three teachers other than myself used ClassDojo.

With the revised interview and focus group questions, I conducted 15 interviews with each of the participants and three focus groups with the student participants. I took audio recordings of these interviews and focus groups. I then transcribed these data sources verbatim in order to analyze the data.

With these transcribed data sources in front of me, the organization and analysis of the data began. According to Moustakas (1994), "organization of the data beings when the primary researcher places the transcribed interviews before him or her and studies the material through the methods and procedures of phenomenal analysis" (p. 118). Those procedures involve "horizonalizing the data and regarding every horizon or statement relevant to the topic and question as having equal value" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 118). Therefore, once the interviews and focus groups were transcribed, I read through all the data sources and coded each statement of each participant using a common qualitative analysis tool—Atlas.ti. Creswell (2013) describes in

vivo codes, noting that they consist of using the exact words of the participants. While this was one type of coding that I used, I also used names that I created myself to summarize the data that I was reading (Creswell, 2013). I then arranged and merged codes based on their similarity and composed themes into which the codes coalesced. These codes and themes were recorded in a hierarchical/pictorial form and called Concept Maps (see Appendix F). From these themes I composed individual textural and structural descriptions for each of the participants.

This chapter contains those textural and structural descriptions for each of the 15 participants that were composed as previously described. Direct quotations were included in order to allow for authenticity with respect to the participants. All quotations of participants are unedited for grammar and syntax in order to let the authentic voice of each participant be heard.

Participants' Individual Textural Descriptions

Individual textural descriptions were written in order to describe what each participant experienced regarding the phenomenon. I conducted a total of 15 interviews—three with teachers and 12 with students—and three focus groups. Each interview and focus group was transcribed verbatim in an effort to accurately represent the experiences of the participants as well as to ensure that I initially treated each statement equally. In order to ensure the anonymity of each participant, Teachers were renamed as Teacher A, B, and C. Their respective students were renamed accordingly as well so that, for example, the students from Teacher A's class are named Students A1, A2, A3, and A4.

Teacher A

Teacher A started to use ClassDojo in her student teaching assignment when one of her professors recommended it to her. She has been using it for almost two years. While she has realized many different uses for ClassDojo, her first experience was simply using it as a

randomizer in order to ensure students were called on equitably. “It started off with in grad school…there was a big push on um making sure that everything was equitable and doing equity sticks. And so I was like, ‘This is lame; don’t do equity sticks, just do ClassDojo.’” That first exposure to ClassDojo as a randomizer was just the beginning, though. What Teacher A found out was that there was so much more to ClassDojo than just its randomization abilities. But her experience with the other features of ClassDojo occurred very gradually. With more and more use of the technology, she discovered more and more capabilities. “And then, when I started using messenger—it’s like every little piece that I’ve like learned about Dojo, I get really excited about and I want to share it with—‘cause it works.” Teacher A recalled wanting to use ClassDojo both because it seemed intriguing and fun as well as the fact that she disliked other classroom management programs that she deemed boring. Her continued use of the technology stems from an excitement as she continually learns about its many capabilities as well as her belief in its effectiveness.

Teacher A finds ClassDojo to be an effective classroom management program for a great many reasons. First, she thinks that it is an effective way to give students an immediate correction for their behavior. Next, she finds it to be a great developer of responsibility in students. In her use of ClassDojo, she enjoys including personal goals for the students. Students also have the opportunity to become the Dojo Master where they get to be in control of the delving out of ClassDojo points for the day. They are able to give points to whomever participates. She communicated that this shared sense of responsibility in the class brings about more of a desire to do well amongst her students. In return for these responsibility roles students take on, Teacher A verbally recognizes them when possible. She said, “I try to like verbalize, like ‘Good job Joseph on being on task. Thank you very much.’ And I’ll give him a Dojo point.”

These verbal recognition moments are Teacher A's attempt to recognize her students' responsibility and award them for it.

Teacher A also finds ClassDojo to be beneficial to her students because it is fun and engaging. It keeps students "on their toes" and engaged in the content. "I think it does keep the kids engaged 'cause they're always on their toes, like 'Am I gonna get a point? I wanna get a point.' Um, and so I think in that way, it really helps in engagement." While she denied any necessary connection between this engagement and student achievement, she did find it interesting that some of the students who had been trying to improve their ClassDojo scores in her class have seen their academic grades improving a good deal. So, she does tend to believe there to be a connection between the engagement that ClassDojo brings and student achievement, even though to quantify it would be too difficult for her at this early stage of implementation.

Another main benefit that Teacher A mentioned regarding the use of ClassDojo was the communication that it allows between the teacher and parents. The ClassDojo messenger feature allows her to "get messages from parents on my…iPhone….so I can instant message them back and it's a really convenient way of communicating with my parents and they seem to love it, 'cause I get back to them really fast that way." Teacher A even mentioned the fact that ClassDojo messenger aided in the arrangement of a face-to-face meeting with a parent that would not have otherwise happened.

There were two main drawbacks that Teacher A found to the use of ClassDojo. The first had to do with the noises that the system makes. When a student receives a positive point, a positive sound is played through the speakers of the computer (which in some configurations can be heard across the room). Likewise, a negative sound can be heard when a student receives a negative point. Teacher A felt that "maybe there's times where you'd wanna turn off the

sound...or the visual maybe even at times. Maybe it's not appropriate to have it up. I find that the visual's more important to me than the sound." She mentioned that sometimes the sound can "break the lesson up a bit." Her other concern had to do with the use of ClassDojo in certain contexts. She specifically found lecture to be a time when ClassDojo was less effective and sometimes even annoying.

Regarding Teacher A's implementation of ClassDojo, she offers extrinsic rewards tied to her students' ClassDojo points. At the end of each grading period, she prints certificates that are offered to the individuals in her classes who have had the most points (and therefore the best behavior). Students can receive these points for participating, working hard, being prepared, on task, helpful, and/or quiet. They can also receive negative points for talking, distracting others, or being off-task. While points are given to individuals only, Teacher A thinks that giving a point to one student can just as quickly correct that one student as it can another. "It's funny when I give a point to somebody for a positive thing all of a sudden everyone in the room just kind of sits up straighter."

Regarding the rewards that Teacher A gives, she was surprised to find that it is not always the brightest students who receive the certificates at the end of the grading period. To her surprise, it is often students whom she would not normally expect to be getting an award. She explained:

> I think what I've been surprised by—I always knew—I mean there's gonna be some kids that are just, they're achievers and they like gold stars and they like to get "A's" and they're—those are my kids that tend to always get points on Dojo. But what I was surprised by is now that I've been doing it for these—this many months, I went in to do my highest Dojo masters. And when I did that, what I was surprised is it wasn't the kids

> that were your always-the-hand-up kids. It was my kids that were quiet, and always on task, but never drawing attention to themselves. And, maybe they don't get the recognition. And the other thing that I thought was interesting that they weren't my highest grade students either. Um, I actually—one of my classes it's a "C" student who got um the Dojo Master for this term. And I think it's because he's really trying, and he is really working at it, and he's engaged in class, and he's doing—when we're doing reading, he's on it. Because he's really trying. …He's not necessarily gonna be student of the month, 'cause he's not your "A" student. But this is a way that he can achieve and he can succeed and he can feel that success.

While there are all these benefits that come from ClassDojo, Teacher A also recognizes some difficulties in its implementation. Sometimes she just gets too busy and forgets to use it. At those times she can tend to feel a void in the classroom as she explains: "I do find the behavior starts to slip. And um, and then when I get back to using it, a few simple [positive points]…gets the whole class back together….And then I'm like, 'Oh, yeah that's what I was missing.'" Other difficulties that Teacher A mentioned include simply getting accustomed to using ClassDojo and making it a part of one's everyday classroom routine. She mentioned the fact that holding an extra device (tablet or smartphone) can sometimes not be natural and requires some getting used to. Nevertheless, she found value in getting used to it and wishes in those moments when she forgets to use it that she would use it more often.

Teacher A came up with a laundry list of technological devices necessary for the ideal implementation of ClassDojo. She mentioned a laptop, a tablet, a smartphone, speakers, dual projectors and projector screens among other things. Nevertheless, she found that one can still

use it effectively in the absence of many of these devices. Simply a smartphone and a way to display the points was enough for her to find use in ClassDojo.

Teacher A thought that the implementation of ClassDojo in her classroom aided in the way her administrators viewed her. She believed that she was teaching at a school where trying new things and taking risks was highly valued and equated to an asset to the educational team. Any benefit she would receive from her administrators' view of her was derived from this desire to try new things rather than using technology in-and-of itself. She felt her administrators did not necessarily value technology use per se, but valued teachers taking risks. Whatever their motive, she felt that ClassDojo benefited her in regards to how her administrators viewed her teaching. Nevertheless, her use of ClassDojo did not hinge on whether or not it made her look good to administrators. Rather, she was concerned about what was best for her students. Whether or not her administrators liked her using ClassDojo, she felt it was beneficial for their success and therefore planned to use it.

Teacher B

Teacher B does not really remember how she initially heard about ClassDojo. She does, however, remember the circumstances under which she sought it out. During her first year of teaching, Teacher B had an exceptionally challenging group of students. She remembers finding it very difficult to ever get the class under control. After multiple failed attempts at different classroom management strategies, someone mentioned ClassDojo and she felt she had nothing to lose trying one more system. What she found was that ClassDojo was much more effective and much easier than any other classroom management system she had tried. "I mean that's why I kept using it the whole year. I did try all sorts of different things....[but] those kind of fell to the side and I still kept—kept using the ClassDojo because it was easy."

Teacher B finds ClassDojo to be an effective way of managing a class. She mentioned nine different good behaviors that she finds to be evident in her students as opposed to only three bad behaviors. Indeed, this emphasis on focusing on the good behaviors is a theme for Teacher B. She said that she used to use the system so much for negative behaviors that she even got to the point of not really knowing what to do with the fact that students had 20 negative points. As a result, she revamped her use of the system to focus on positive behaviors. In fact, she even mentioned actively finding ways to give students positive points (by giving points to virtually the whole class). What she found was that using negative points more sparingly can almost have a shocking effect on students:

> I don't use the negatives nearly as much as I used to last year and a lot of it is because of the behavior of my students. Last year, I felt like I was constantly hitting that negative sound, trying to—I guess it was more of a reaction too to their being loud so I'm taking points from everybody, and whether they cared or not, and they didn't seem to care as much last year where this year because their behaviors are better and they are more conditioned to hearing the chime when they hear the negative sound, it does bring it to their attention more because it's a different sound and they aren't used to hearing it as often so then they're thinking, "Who got—who lost a point?" And it's a bigger deal, because I don't use it as much.

As is evident from the preceding quotation, Teacher B thinks that ClassDojo works (at least partially) due to conditioning (whether operant or classic). While she never came out and put that term on it, multiple statements she made seemed to indicate a belief in this theory. At one point she alluded to conditioning by saying, "I definitely think the sounds um help….They are…accustomed to hearing the sounds, and so when they do hear it, it changes how their

behaviors are." It is not clear whether her belief ought to be classified as classic conditioning or operant conditioning (in her mind). Since she is the one offering the reinforcement, however, one could argue that it must be operant conditioning. In another testimonial to her belief in conditioning, she said, "that that's how they learned it, so having the sound is important…when they know and expect to hear it, then when they don't it kind of is…not as effective, I guess."

Teacher B is very adamant about how it is extremely important to make the ClassDojo points have value. While she mentioned some examples of how students find intrinsic value from being good in the class, she was very clear about the need for ClassDojo points to have some sort of outside value tied to them. In speaking of another teacher's implementation of a non-ClassDojo point system, she said, "They just like giving themselves the points, and I do see—I do see them liking getting the points, but I feel like they still want to know that it's worth something." In Teacher B's classroom, this extrinsic worth of ClassDojo points is realized in prizes that students can purchase. Throughout the year and at the end of certain grading periods, Teacher B offers an opportunity for students to cash in their ClassDojo points for coupons good for things like "no homework, seat swap for a day, uh five minutes of computer time, five minutes of free time," etc. Teacher B even has hired an outside printing company to make business-card-sized coupons to "sell" to students.

While Teacher B noticed many different benefits of ClassDojo, one of the benefits about which she repeatedly talked was the fact that ClassDojo allows for a scenario where the teacher does not have to talk so much. She was adamant about the fact that ClassDojo allowed for a teacher to make silent corrections to students' behaviors without the need to say anything.

Teacher B felt that the most effective use of ClassDojo involved students being able to hear the sounds that ClassDojo makes. While she allowed for a possibility of students needing to

see ClassDojo visually, that was not nearly as important to her as students' ability to hear ClassDojo and the sounds that it makes. She believed that this was what caused the behavior correction to take place. "They have to have the sound. They—I think the sound is very important." As such, in describing the necessary technology to use ClassDojo effectively, she said that surround sound speakers would be important. While one could also get away with some sort of Bluetooth speaker connected to a mobile device, in some way students would need to be able to hear the sounds that ClassDojo makes. While she allowed for living without it for a day or two, in the long term sounds are essential for Teacher B. As such, she did not list very many technological devices that were necessary for the most effective implementation of ClassDojo. To Teacher B, a mobile device (such as a tablet or smartphone) as well as some sort of speaker system is completely sufficient for using ClassDojo well.

Teacher B's administrator(s) viewed her using ClassDojo during a formal observation. This led to Teacher B both being verbally commended in the follow-up meeting to the observation as well as a school staff meeting. She also presumed that the administrators would want to see other teachers using it. When asked why she thought administrators liked it, she attributed their excitement to the fact that it was an effective classroom management tool. She did not feel that the mere fact that technology was being used in the classroom was reason enough for them to commend her for using it. Despite all the praise that she received from administrators for using ClassDojo and despite the fact that she mentioned liking that her administrators appreciated her use of ClassDojo, she did not feel that these were valid reasons for starting or continuing to use ClassDojo. She felt that the personal classroom management benefits for a teacher were enough to justify its use without any thought for whether it pleased administrators.

Teacher C

Teacher C heard about ClassDojo from some fellow teachers in her first year of teaching. It sounded intriguing to her and she had already started to think about how it could replace her current classroom management system (which involved giving students tickets that they could cash in for prizes). Despite its allure, she decided not to incorporate it that first year because she had started her assignment midway through the year and was dealing with so many new things all at once that she did not feel she could implement it very well. “It had intrigued me last year, but because I came into the year so late uh I wasn’t interested in taking the time to figure everything out and introduce it.” As such, she waited until the following year. The next year Teacher C did not start off using it from day one. Rather, she used other classroom management strategies that were familiar to her. She found these strategies to be largely ineffective, though, and ended up finally using ClassDojo when she felt like she could handle taking on yet another new thing. “This year I started the year out not using it, and just came to a point where I felt like my management was becoming a little stagnant, and I needed to switch things up a little bit.” And so she did. She felt that the setup of ClassDojo was especially easy and at the time of our interview, she had been using it for six weeks.

One of the main reasons Teacher C started using ClassDojo was because of a site focus at her school on PBIS. This program involves giving students positive reinforcement and praise. In fact, in staff meetings at her site, the teachers have been encouraged to maintain a 4-to-1 ratio of positive comments to corrective (negative) ones. Cognizant of this expectation, she said she started using it in hopes “that it would help me to improve with my PBIS. Um it’s something the PBIS initiative of trying to keep my, you know, positive feedback at the 4-to-1 ratio which is what our ideal is….” She felt that ClassDojo might be the mechanism by which she could

accomplish this goal. As such, when speaking of the behaviors for which she gives points in her class, she mentioned quite a few positive behaviors. On the other hand, she mentioned a handful of negative behaviors that would result in loss of points.

Regarding points, she has made some adaptations to the way she administers ClassDojo points. It is possible for a teacher not only to choose the behaviors that ClassDojo can give points for, but also to set the point values so that certain behaviors are worth more points. She has done this so that certain behaviors on which she wants to focus can be rewarded at a greater degree than others. She tries to give points generously, but sometimes forgets. When she does, the students express feeling short-changed.

One of the reasons why students feel short-changed when Teacher C forgets to use ClassDojo is the fact that there are a number of rewards tied with ClassDojo points in Teacher C's classroom. These rewards consist mostly of coupons that the students can buy. The values of these coupons range from extra credit, to no homework, to five minutes of free time, the ability to leave class three minutes early, or to swap seats with someone else in the classroom for the day. These coupons each cost a certain number of ClassDojo points. As such, students who exhibit good behaviors are able to earn the points necessary to buy these privileges. Every once in a while (sometimes weekly), Teacher C will use the randomizer feature of ClassDojo to simply pick a student for a reward.

> So it hasn't happened as frequently as I would like, but I'd like to be able to say on Friday, "I'm doing the—I'm doing the drawing. Here's all your point totals. I'm randomly picking now everyone can see the people that I'm randomly picking out. So these are the people who will get their coupons for the week and that will cost them nothing other than they're just selected."

Whichever student is chosen will receive a free coupon without having to cash in any ClassDojo points. Otherwise, under normal circumstances, students cash in a number of ClassDojo points in exchange for a coupon.

While Teacher C mentioned a number of different contexts in which she uses ClassDojo, she did not find it to be useless in any particular context. Rather, she mentioned that it has some benefit in any different classroom scenario. In fact, she has even found use for it when she is not in the classroom, having implemented a policy where good behavior for a sub results in positive points when she gets back, and the opposite for bad behavior.

Teacher C is always improving her craft of teaching. While she has found a good deal of success with ClassDojo and believes it to be effective, she talked a great deal about how she hopes to modify and tweak it in the future to increase its impact. She still has a good number of questions for how those modifications will work, which is the only thing holding her back from implementing them. “I haven’t quite figured out all of those little things and um I like to think that stuff through, so that’s not something I feel like I’ll implement this year, but definitely something I wanna consider for next year...” Once she has had enough time to think through the changes in implementation, she will incorporate a number of modifications to her use of ClassDojo.

Overall, Teacher C believed ClassDojo to have many benefits and only a few drawbacks as a classroom management tool. She definitely perceived it to be an effective way to manage a classroom. Consistent with her reasons for starting to use ClassDojo, though, she found one of the biggest benefits to be the fact that it allowed an opportunity for her to remember the need for positive reinforcement. She finds it to be “…a quick and easy way for me to award the points and acknowledge the behavior, which is helping me to keep those things a little bit more

positive….I think it's just helping me to build that habit..." Another benefit of ClassDojo that she found is the fact that it is quick. Teacher C feels that even if one were to award points five minutes after a behavior, there would be some positive effect. Nonetheless, the best implementation of ClassDojo involves students getting immediate feedback regarding their behaviors. ClassDojo is a tool that aids her in that.

While there is an obvious benefit for the teacher regarding classroom management, Teacher C mentioned some other benefits for students. She specifically focused in on social-emotional benefits. Speaking of her students, she said, "…they don't all go home and get some positive feedback" so she felt that a classroom management system that provided that to them at school would be good for their social well-being.

All of the potential drawbacks of ClassDojo that Teacher A mentioned were things that a teacher could account for in their implementation of the program to ensure that these drawbacks were limited. These ranged from students potentially being distracted by their points being displayed, to the technology not being quite as useful with stationary technology, to a teacher having difficulty finding students' names on a small mobile device. Even in her explanation of these potential drawbacks, she provided solutions for how to limit their influence, having thought about it already.

Teacher C's ideal implementation of technology included a speaker system, a desktop computer, a tablet held by the teacher, a charger for a tablet, and a laptop. One interesting suggestion she offered was the ability to have the projector screen use a picture-in-picture feature as is sometimes common with cable providers. This would allow a teacher to have most of the screen dedicated to a PowerPoint on which the content would be displayed, while also having a small portion of the screen dedicated to ClassDojo for classroom management purposes. Teacher

C did not think this technology was available, but thought that were it available, it would be the ideal implementation of ClassDojo.

Regarding her administrators' views of her using ClassDojo, Teacher C was fairly agnostic. Having only used it for six weeks, she did not feel that her administrators were even aware that she was using it. While she could conceive of them possibly liking her use of ClassDojo, that benefit would only be derived from the fact that the technology addresses a site focus. In her mind, they would probably not like her using it simply for the sake of using technology. Rather, all benefit would be contingent upon how one was using the technology. In her case, ClassDojo helps her to reinforce positive behavior—a major component of PBIS (which is a focus of the administration on this campus). Whether or not they viewed her use of ClassDojo as good, however, had little to do with why she started using it or continues to use it. All benefit is derived from her having a more manageable class, not from impressing administration.

Student A1

Student A1 had never heard of ClassDojo before entering this class; this was her first experience with it. In this class, she typically receives positive points. While she feels that sometimes it can be hard to earn positive points, she enjoys earning them because she feels a sense of pride in having a lot of points. She feels that she has achieved something when she is rewarded with a positive point. Furthermore, positive points are beneficial to her in that she perceives there to be a silent competition going on between she and the other students in the class. As such, the more positive points she has, the better off she is in that competition. Surprisingly, Student A1 does not mind at all when she gets a negative point. When asked if she disliked getting negative points, she responded, "Not really. Sometimes it's pretty good to know

that she [the Teacher] notices you actually aren't paying attention—to see that she actually pays attention to you." She also mentioned that this is an opportunity for reflection and growth. When she gets a negative point, it reminds her that she did something wrong and motivates her to get back on task and do better the next time. When asked how she feels when she gets negative points, she said, "I feel like I did something wrong so I'll try my best to do the right thing that time. 'Cause sometimes you don't pay attention, but 'cause like you get distracted, but then it gets you on task again."

Another motivating factor for this student is the fact that ClassDojo provides communication between the teacher and parents. Because of this, Student A1 always tries to be on her best behavior so that her parents will see that she is behaving in class and receiving a lot of positive points. She also likes the fact that ClassDojo can serve as objective proof to her parents that she behaves well in class.

Regarding the implementation of ClassDojo, Student A1 had multiple ideas for how to use it. She felt that ClassDojo was good for traditionally ill-behaved students as it allowed the teacher to keep an eye on those students. She also believed that having a visual indicator of ClassDojo (such as the points projected on a screen) helped with implementation as it reminded the students of the need to behave. She found it to be most helpful during reading, when students are given the ability to be the Dojo Master and choose which student will read next. In this context it is most beneficial simply for the fact that students know it will be used in this setting. "Usually because like everybody knows it's happening. It's not like, 'Oh yeah you answered a question, I'll pick you'…. You have to do it because if you don't you'll actually miss a point." As such, she ensures that she is always in the right place for the reading because she does not want to lose a positive point.

Student A1 thought that her teacher probably uses ClassDojo because it makes students behave better in class. When asked about why her teacher probably used ClassDojo, she said, "Well, she told us it was to communicate with our parents, but I'm not sure. It's probably to make sure that we do better in her class….With paying attention." She thought it was effective because she recognizes both that negative points indicate a need for her to change her behavior and because negative points for another student would cause her to desire to change her own behavior.

Regarding technology, Student A1 felt it was important that the teacher be mobile. While her teacher uses a computer and she mentioned the need of a computer for ClassDojo to be used most effectively, she pointed out the superiority of mobile technology in the implementation of ClassDojo. This is mainly due to the fact that teachers are able to move freely about the room and see scenarios from all different perspectives. Without that ability, classroom management diminishes, according to Student A1. As such, she felt that a tablet or phone and a projector were necessary for the best implementation of ClassDojo. She also mentioned the importance of students being able to see their points for ClassDojo (due to how this causes better behavior because students try to compete for the most points). While the visual aid of ClassDojo was important, she did not see any value in the sounds that ClassDojo makes, admitting though that she had never experienced them. Due to the simplistic model she put forth as to how much technology a teacher needs, she deemed that just about any teacher could easily use ClassDojo, no matter how comfortable they were with technology.

Student A2

This class marks the first time Student A2 has experienced ClassDojo. He sees ClassDojo primarily as a classroom management tool. It aids a teacher in controlling a class by

communicating to students what behaviors they are exhibiting. He sees this feature as a necessary reminder for students regarding their behavior. “It helps the students see if they’re being bad or being good and to know to keep doing the same thing or change it.” One of the more motivating factors for Student A2 is his desire to please. He mentioned wanting to please his teacher and hypothesized that getting a negative point would make him feel embarrassed. “I’d be embarrassed probably a little bit and I’d try to get it back up, try to work harder.” When asked in front of whom he would feel embarrassed, he responded, “probably from the teacher mostly.” In fact, he denied caring at all about what the students thought of him. Another reason he wanted to succeed at ClassDojo was due to his parents’ ability to see his points. He was very aware of his parents ability to see his points and expressed concern in letting them down.

These characteristics of wanting to please the adults in his life and (as a result) not wanting to get negative points lead Student A2 to a desire to always get positive points. When he does, he feels accomplished and proud of himself. If he were to get a negative point he would dislike it very much. Either way, though, whatever points he gets he views as an opportunity to reevaluate his behavior. Whereas positive points remind him that he is doing the right thing and reinforce the need to keep the same behaviors going, negative points are an opportunity for him to realize the need to change his behavior. “Um I’d try to fix it and do—and try to remember what I did to get a good point and try to do that again.”

Student A2 believes that ClassDojo works well in any given situation, though he mentioned how it works exceptionally well during individual work. At these times, students have a tendency to be quietly off-task. The existence and presence of ClassDojo helps remind students not to get too far off-task during these times. He mentioned that ClassDojo works very well when students are “doing silent work because usually that’s when uh kids try to like whisper to

each other ‘cause [Teacher A’s] at her desk…and even though she’s watching they don’t really know….” But in those times ClassDojo helps: “…and so when they see their [points] go down or up, it helps ‘em.”

As far as a connection between the behavior improvements realized through ClassDojo and an improvement of academics, Student A2 was not certain. He hypothesized, however, that since ClassDojo helps students to remain on task more and since it helps students (himself included) to pay more attention during instruction, there was likely an academic benefit to be realized by using ClassDojo. The scale of this academic benefit, however, is likely dependent upon the student. “Because if I’m always on task…and get all my work in, I’ll probably get a good grade for as if I was never on task and didn’t get my work in, I wouldn’t have that good of a grade.”

As far as the technology needed for the ideal implementation of ClassDojo, Student A2 felt it necessary for teachers to have a mobile device (such as a tablet), a computer, and a projector. These are the same things that his teacher uses now. He found the visual aid of students’ points being displayed to be very valuable in the implementation of ClassDojo. Without it, he imagined that students would just behave however they saw fit, assuming that they had a sufficient number of points “‘cause you wouldn’t know if you’re being bad or wouldn’t know if you were doing the right thing and so you’d really just go on what you think.”

Student A2 did not feel that there was any cause for concern regarding technological difficulties with ClassDojo. His teacher had never experienced any. He felt that a teacher would need a basic working knowledge of computer operation in order to implement ClassDojo. When asked if virtually anyone could do it, he pointed out one particular older teacher who probably could not because he had trouble even operating a computer. This led to a distinction between

older and younger teachers. “Probably the newer, like the younger teachers these days could probably have an easier time than the older teachers who’ve been teaching a while.”

Student A3

This class marks the first time that Student A3 has encountered ClassDojo. Though she does not have a lot of experience with it, she mentioned the importance in her mind of receiving positive points. She mentioned multiple times the fact that positive points indicate to her that she is behaving appropriately to the point of being a role model for the other students. While negative points indicate some of the same things other students mentioned (such as feeling disappointed and trying to do things right the next time), Student A3 mentioned the fact that they often make her feel as if she has disrespected the teacher. When asked why she disliked negative points, she said, “Because it makes me feel that I’m not on task and not like respecting the teacher and stuff like that.” While being disappointed in herself for her behavior was evident, Student A3 also mentioned feeling more distraught about having disappointed the teacher than being disappointed in herself. One other motivating factor for her is the reality that she views ClassDojo as a silent competition between her and the other students. This competition is part of why she believes ClassDojo to be fun.

While Student A3 mentioned some different contexts in which ClassDojo might be useful, one of the uses which she found to be most beneficial was the messenger feature of ClassDojo. “She did this a couple weeks ago. She um she sent a message on ClassDojo and I think—I’m pretty sure she was at home and she did it from her phone where she sent out a message….” These messages can be used to inform students of an upcoming test or a change to a test date as well as to remind parents what the homework is that night. Whatever the context, though, Student A3 found ClassDojo to always be useful to one degree or another.

In the event that her teacher forgets to use ClassDojo, Student A3 feels that it may or may not create a void in the classroom. This is usually dependent upon how other students are acting. If students are off-task and Student A3 feels that they should be getting a negative point, then ClassDojo is sorely missed. “But it’s if…we’re doing like random classwork and it’s starting getting loud, you can tell, ‘Oh my gosh where’s the ClassDojo. Doesn’t he get to um a negative point?’” If, however, the class is silently reading or otherwise working quietly, it is not noticeable that ClassDojo is missing.

As far as any connection between the classroom management of ClassDojo and improved academics, Student A3 believes that there is no direct connection between behavior and academics. She also believes, however, that ClassDojo helps students to pay more attention, which probably means getting better grades. “Yes because if um some of the grades—like if you’re talking and not listening to her, you might miss some directions and do the piece of homework wrong…I guess yes it does help with your grades.”

Student A3 felt that the technology needed for the ideal implementation of ClassDojo includes a phone, a computer, a tablet, and a projector. These are the devices that her teacher currently uses. She also believes that mobile technology is to be preferred over stationary technology. This is due to the fact that teachers need to walk the room and see all students. Another reason to prefer mobile technology has to do with the fact that “maybe she’ll get tired or something or um tired of sitting or tired of standing.” The variety that mobile technology offers is to be desired, according to Student A3. While she does not recall any issues with technical difficulties, Student A3 feels that a teacher’s technological fluency plays a role in whether or not they can use ClassDojo. In her view, teachers need a working knowledge of computers and other electronic devices to implement ClassDojo well. “They need to know how to like put the app on

the computer so you can get it and then how to work the projector and how to um take the SMART Board…."

Student A4

Student A4 had never experienced ClassDojo before this school year. Now that he has some experience with ClassDojo, he views it as primarily a classroom management tool. While at one point he mentioned that it may only help control some (not all) students, he still deemed the way that his teacher was using it as effective (albeit only for certain students). "Our teacher is doing like the way that she has it is um working very well on some students."

In his experience with ClassDojo in Teacher A's classroom, Student A4 categorized himself as usually earning positive points, though at times he has received a negative point or two. He mentions really enjoying the fact that he has earned a positive point due to the rewards that are a part of his teacher's implementation of ClassDojo in saying, "Um I'm happy because I know that and that's like one more point towards what I wanna try to get at the end." Another reason earning positive points excites Student A4 is that it gets him closer to his goal of beating the other students in the class in his silent competition with them regarding who can earn the most points.

Student A4 dislikes getting negative points for much the same reason as he enjoys positive points, "because then you, it lowers you down from getting that reward and from like your um like I said your competition with your friends that you could maybe be having." So, while positive points get him closer to his goal of earning rewards and beating his classmates in a silent competition, negative points take him further from that goal. As such, when he receives negative points, he views that as a time when he needs to be on his best behavior in order to recover that lost point. "Um I feel kinda upset and I try to wanna get um like turn it around and

try to get a positive point again….because um that makes me farther away from what I wanna try to reach."

Regarding specific contexts in which ClassDojo is most helpful, Student A4 mentioned individual work and group work as ideal times. Nevertheless, he pointed out that group work is an ideal implementation of ClassDojo simply due to the more distracting nature of that task. Since students are asked to talk with one another during group work, they are more likely to get off-task because "when you're in groups, you're more likely to mess around with your other, with your friends; when you're individual um most people would like to try to um get their work done." Therefore, ClassDojo is most helpful in this time because it is the time when classroom management is most needed.

Student A4 mentioned that his teacher uses a computer, a tablet, and a projector in her current use of ClassDojo. While he saw this as the ideal technological equipment, when allowed to let his mind run wild with other technology one could use, he mentioned the use of video cameras to record the students so that if the teacher missed a behavior that deserved a point, she could watch the footage to award it later. One thing he was sure about was the need for mobile technology rather than stationary technology to ideally implement ClassDojo "…so she can see the other students…goofing off or not doing their work."

Regarding ClassDojo's audio capabilities, Student A4 mentioned never having heard the sounds that ClassDojo makes. He hypothesized that the sounds could potentially be helpful, but ultimately remained agnostic on this issue since he had not experienced them. He did, however, have an opinion about ClassDojo's visual. While his teacher often displays the visual of ClassDojo, he felt that the absence of the visual might actually be preferred due to the ambiguity in students' minds of how many points they have. In this scenario, "they would not know how

many points they would have, so they—I think they'd maybe try to do better so um 'cause they would, 'cause they, for all they know they could have like two or three." So, according to Student A4 the ambiguity in students' minds as to how many points they had would cause them to be working hard for positive points all the time since they did not know if they had a few points or a lot (and presumably whether or not they were winning the silent competition).

Student A4 viewed the implementation of ClassDojo as not too difficult regarding the technological competency one needs in order to use it well. That being said, he remained agnostic regarding what the specifics were of what exactly a teacher would need to know and be able to do technologically in order to use ClassDojo. While he mentioned that they would need to know how to set it up and have a basic working knowledge of computers and other electronic devices (such as a projector), Student A4 did not feel that he was knowledgeable enough about implementing ClassDojo to properly comment from a teacher's perspective. He was comfortable, however, saying that not knowing how to work ClassDojo properly would be a distraction for students. "Somebody that doesn't know what they're doing could maybe um disrupt…."

Student B1

Student B1 had never experienced ClassDojo before entering this class. Since being introduced to it in this class, however, she has quickly learned its strengths and weaknesses. She finds ClassDojo to have a three-fold purpose. She feels that it is a classroom management tool, a system for rewarding students, and a way for teachers to communicate to their students how smart the students are (or are not). Regarding its classroom management capabilities, Student B1 focuses mainly on the giving of points. She has never received a negative point, but quite frequently receives positive points. While she has never received a negative point, she can imagine that getting one would greatly upset her. In fact, when asked why she would not like to

get negative points, she said, “It would be harder for me to learn the subject and I need to practice a little bit more on it.” This would be mainly due to the fact that she would be upset about having done something wrong. On the other hand, she enjoys getting positive points and finds them to be intrinsically rewarding.

Despite the intrinsic reward, Student B1 finds ClassDojo to be of great value due to its ability to extrinsically reward students. This comes in the form of raffles and the purchasing of coupons/tickets that can be used to get out of class early, not have to do a homework assignment, etc. The third way she believed her teacher to use ClassDojo was as a means to communicate to students how smart they were (or were not). She mentioned this multiple times in multiple contexts. Receiving positive points makes her feel smart, while receiving negative points might cause her to perceive the content as more difficult. “I wouldn’t like…[receiving negative points] because…it’s like I feel like the subject is a little bit more harder.” For Student B1, points given out by the teacher and a feeling of one’s intelligence are inextricably linked.

For this reason, Student B1 feels that ClassDojo is very useful for helping one pay more attention in class, to the point that she would give that as a reason to her friends when referring them to ClassDojo. In fact, she believes it to always be useful to one degree or another. One context in which Student B1 feels ClassDojo to be exceptionally helpful is during group work. This can often be attributed to the peer pressure factor. “Um when everybody is quiet sometimes like one person’s talking and she deducts points and…the people in their group are trying to make him or her quiet and concentrate on the group work or individual activity.”

Student B1 believes that there is definitely a connection between the better behavior that ClassDojo brings about and better academics. She attributes this to the fact that behaving better causes one to pay more attention and generally be more engaged in the classroom, which results

in higher test scores. This increased student engagement and participation does not result in a small effect on the students involved, but actually improves student achievement quite significantly. “It will result in a big difference since they’re being quiet in class, they’re concentrating more. They’ll—they will—it will bring their grades up….”

As far as technology is concerned, Student B1 felt that a teacher should minimally have a computer and a mobile device to properly implement ClassDojo well. The mobile device was important to her as she perceives teacher mobility to be very important for a teacher’s ability to implement ClassDojo without ignoring other teacher duties. Due to her view that the audio rather than the visual cues from ClassDojo were extremely helpful for curbing bad behaviors, Student B1 saw the need for speakers in a classroom that is attempting to implement ClassDojo well. She did not, however, find a projector to be necessary. When asked if a screen at the front of the room to display students’ points would be beneficial, she replied, “No, because there’s always like this noise on her phone when she like adds a point and deducts a point….I don’t need to see it.”

Regarding a teacher’s technological skills required for implementing ClassDojo, Student B1 did not feel that it would be too difficult for most people. A teacher would simply need to have a basic knowledge of how computers work as well as the ability to log on to a website. “I think they could use ClassDojo as long as they know how to log on to it and their user password.”

Student B2

While this is Student B2’s first year experiencing ClassDojo, she actually has another teacher using it this year. She usually gets positive points both in Teacher B’s classroom as well as in her other teacher’s classroom and cannot remember having ever earned a negative point.

She likes getting positive points mainly because it is simply affirmation that she is on-task and doing the right thing. Negative points would upset her. In fact, she mentioned that receiving a negative point might cause her to politely question the teacher as to why she had received it. "Um I would raise my hand and ask why I got a negative point and then if she tells me I was talking then I would just be there quiet." Whatever her teacher's reply, negative points would cause Student B2 to correct her behavior in order to do the right thing the next time and not receive any more negative points.

While she sees ClassDojo as primarily a classroom management tool, another primary purpose for it is to reward students. She mentioned the prizes that she and her classmates can buy as well as the raffles as reasons to enjoy ClassDojo. She also sees her teacher as benevolent in offering those prizes since she does not feel that it is necessary in order to control the class. She mentioned thinking that it was "nice that we get a prize for, you know, actually doing our work even though she doesn't really need to do it, but you know, she's just really nice that way."

Student B2 found individual work to be the most useful time to implement ClassDojo. At this time students are generally more motivated to work. In the context of group work, on the other hand, she mentioned, "We don't listen like we don't really care if like we get positive points…." Because of this lack of concern during group work that is not the case during individual work, Student B2 finds ClassDojo to be less effective. She does believe, however, that it is always effective to some extent or another.

While at one point, Student B2 felt as if she were above the need for improved academics, she reasoned that there was a connection between better behavior (because of ClassDojo) and better academics. This effect was determined to be a moderate one. This is due to the fact that positive points generally lead to better student engagement, which results in

students' grades rising. When asked about the effect of raised student engagement, Student B said the following:

> Uh, I guess because they would probably talking to their neighbor and then when they hear a positive points then they'll know like, "Okay um I shouldn't do that." Or if they hear a negative point then they'll be like, "Oh my gosh, okay so," and they'll focus more on like what she's teaching or like what she's saying and stuff.

For Student B2, this increased ability to pay attention will result in moderate academic gains as compared to a classroom where ClassDojo is not being used.

With regard to technology, Student B2 feels that just about anyone can use ClassDojo. She thinks that the proper way to implement it, however, is through mobile technology. Using mobile technology allows the teacher so many options that are not otherwise available. For instance, one can use ClassDojo outside during learning activities that take place outside the classroom. The more technology, the better for Student B2. Because of her belief that ClassDojo works best with audio and video, she feels that the minimum technology one ought to have to implement this system well is a computer, a projector, a mobile device, and speakers. In fact, the absence of the visual representation of her ClassDojo points at the front of the room causes her to download the ClassDojo app on her phone in order to be able to check how many points she has at any given time. "I have it on my phone and then like I check every week if I earned a point and then stuff—or if I lost a point…."

Student B3

Student B3 had not been familiar with ClassDojo before this class. This is her first experience with it. She finds ClassDojo to be a very fun and exciting experience as well as

effective. In fact, Student B3 said, “if I found it if I was a teacher, I would—I’d honestly download it.”

Although Student B3 is aware that ClassDojo is a point system and would mention that fact to a friend who did not know about it, she has never received a negative point, only positive ones. In fact, negative points were so foreign to her, that were she to get one, she would likely question why she had. When asked how she would feel if she got a negative point, she said, “I would feel suspicious….” One of her motivating factors for trying to get positive points and for feeling suspicious at the thought of a negative point is the fact that she is so motivated by the rewards one can receive in ClassDojo. Those rewards are worthwhile to her and she strives to get them. That is why she was very pleased that her teacher recently added free rewards where every week a certain table group gets a free reward for being good that week.

When asked about any possible connection between one’s behavior in ClassDojo and one’s grades in the class, Student B3 thought there was a connection. When asked to expound, however, she was not able to articulate how or why this connection may exist. The only connection that she could articulate was the noise level (which ClassDojo affects) and students’ ability to learn. “So sometimes yeah because if she forgets [to use ClassDojo] the whole class is gonna be noisy and disruptive and no one’s gonna basically learn anything that day.” As such, she believes that using ClassDojo stems the tide of noisiness and disruption, which leads to better learning for students.

Student B3 believes that the minimum technology needed for the ideal implementation of ClassDojo includes a projector, a computer, a mobile device, and speakers. These last two items are important because of the effectiveness of ClassDojo’s audio and visual cues, according to Student B3. While she can imagine a scenario in which using ClassDojo without the visual

capabilities would still be effective, she feels that both the sound and the video are important for the best implementation.

At one point, Student B3 mentioned that mobile technology and stationary technology were equal with respect to ease of implementing ClassDojo. This is because "if you're in class, you can just go to the computer and click on it and project it. And if you're on the phone, you can use the speakers for the sound." Despite having said this, though, she also mentioned the fact that mobile technology is slightly preferred over stationary technology because one does not have to walk to a computer to assign ClassDojo points. According to Student B3, just about anybody could implement ClassDojo because "all you have to do is make an account and make little groups, characters, and press up a button."

Student B4

This class marks the first time that Student B4 has encountered ClassDojo. She sees the program as intended for a few purposes. One purpose of ClassDojo is to reward students. She usually gets positive points. Student B4 can imagine a scenario in which students are so focused on getting positive points that they cannot really focus on their schoolwork. "Well if you're worried about getting points and you'd be more off-task thinking, 'I'm trying to get a point.'" Nevertheless, overall she thinks that ClassDojo helps students to behave better in class and she likes getting them. Positive points are not, however, a reason for Student B4 to celebrate excessively. "I don't feel like to like scream out loud, but it feels, it just feels normal." Negative points, however, bring about a different reaction in Student B4. She has received them in the past and recalls those instances as reminders that she needs to fix her behavior and start doing good things that get her positive points. "It makes me know like—it's like now a warning saying, 'Don't yell out loud or like do anything to distract other people.'"

Regarding specific class contexts in which ClassDojo works better than others, Student B4 felt that group work was most effective. This is due more to the natural effects of being in a group than ClassDojo itself. “When we’re in like groups because if one of us hear it, we’re all like, ‘Shhh’ and it quiet down fast. ‘Cause if you were to hear by yourself…you’d still be like talking.” That being said, during group work students are expected to be talking. As such, ClassDojo is not very effective for keeping students quiet at this time due to the nature of what students are expected to be doing—talking. In fact, Student B4 equates these two notions—that classroom management is the same as a quiet classroom.

Student B4 sees a connection between better behavior and better academics. This benefit can be realized in the fact that students are more engaged and, as such, learn more. Because ClassDojo “…helps ‘em [students] stay on track…,” students are able to pay more attention, which leads to better grades according to Student B4.

Regarding technology, Student B4 feels that mobile devices are to be much preferred over stationary ones. The reason that mobile technology is superior is due to its ease of use. Imagining a scenario where a teacher is across the room from a behavior that deserves a point, Student B4 said, “if she didn’t have a tablet or phone, it’d be a little harder. She would have to probably come back here, exit out, come back and like it’d be so difficult.” As such, she sees the most effective implementation of ClassDojo as including a computer, a mobile device, a projector, a projector screen, and speakers. The absence of any one of these devices would diminish the effect of ClassDojo. Due to her belief that quietness means classroom control, Student B4 feels that the sounds that ClassDojo makes are very important because they help quiet the class. Likewise, she feels that the absence of the visual would cause ambiguity for students regarding how many points they have to the point that they would be trying to sneak a

peek at the teacher's computer in order to see if they had received any points. Because of these beliefs, Student B4 went so far as to say that the absence of the ClassDojo audio and visual would render it ineffective. That being said, she feels that implementing it properly does not take a lot of effort. To get ClassDojo ready for the day is simply a matter of a minute or two that just about anyone could do. While there are technical difficulties every once in a while, she feels that those are easily overcome by teacher improvisation such as calling out points when the audio portion is not functioning.

Student C1

Student C1 had never experienced ClassDojo before this year; this was his first exposure to it. His experience only includes getting positive points. He cannot remember ever having received a negative one. His motivation for seeking positive points and refraining from negative ones is one dimensional. Whereas one could make a case for the merit of positive points based on the rewards associated with doing so (both intrinsic and extrinsic), Student C1 is solely motivated by the desire to beat others in a silent competition for points. While he enjoys the prizes that can be purchased due to receiving positive points in ClassDojo, these are just fringe benefits for him. Ultimately it comes down to beating his fellow classmates in a competition (whether that competition is just in his head or real for them as well). In explaining this, he said, "It makes me feel good, you know, to get a lot of points. More than others, yeah."

While Student C1 explained that the silent competition was his only motivation for getting positive points (and avoiding negative ones), he also mentioned another reason for enjoying ClassDojo. One of Student C1's main reasons for liking ClassDojo is the fact that it keeps students (especially himself) in line. He enjoys being corrected by ClassDojo (when he hears the sound associated with a negative point because it reminds him that he is not paying

attention and doing his best at that moment. “I would still like it…‘cause if you’re off-task then you could get back on task, instead of her like walking over there or him walking over there and telling you like um, ‘Get back on task.’” ClassDojo’s ability to quickly communicate to students whether they are behaving or misbehaving without a teacher having to waste time to walk across the room is a very important feature for Student C1. That being said, even though Student C1 is mainly focused on the competition factor of ClassDojo and the ability for it to quickly communicate students’ behavior, he also enjoys the rewards that one can receive because of the program. These rewards come in the form of prizes that can be purchased.

At different times Student C1 made reference to ClassDojo being ideal for implementation in both individual and group work. In individual work, students are not tempted by their group members to be off-task. Therefore, it works well in those situations. It is also effective, however, in group work because sometimes students can remind their group members that they are being off-task and can warn them away from a negative point.

Student C1 sees an indirect connection between better behavior and better academics. This connection can mainly be attributed to the fact that positive points lead to better student engagement. In fact, this is one of the main reasons why Student C1 enjoys ClassDojo and finds it to be effective.

> It would help ‘em um uh—like most people like um if they weren’t to hear that, they would just keep talking and then if the bell were to ring then they wouldn’t have anything and then they would have to turn it in and they wouldn’t have a lot of work and they would get like a “F” on that assignment thing or work. And if you hear um uh a good sound—err I mean a bad sound—um you’ll get back on track like as fast as you can to catch up with others.

Regarding technology, Student C1 was very adamant about the need for mobile technological devices in order to best implement ClassDojo. Because mobile devices are so much easier to get around with, they are to be preferred. Even more than the portability of the technological device, however, is the quickness with which a teacher can respond to behaviors. Because it would take so much longer to walk to a computer and record a student's misbehavior, Student C1 feels that mobile technology should be preferred due to the extra learning time that is not lost when mobile technology is used. "'Cause if she was like walking around the room and someone does something bad, she would have to walk all the way over there, click it, and then walk back, and..."

Student C1 feels that both the audio and visual components of ClassDojo have something good to offer. The visual is important, though it does not need to be displayed at all times. It could just be shown on regular intervals to update students on how many points they have. The audio, however, is important to have at all times as it is very influential in bringing about changed behavior in students. As such, it is important for effectively implementing ClassDojo. When faced with the notion of using ClassDojo without any sound, he replied that he did not think it would be as effective "because if you hear the noise then you could tell that you're doing good or if you hear a bad noise you would stop what you're doing bad and you would go back on track." Because of the ease of use involved regarding ClassDojo, Student C1 felt that just about anyone could implement it well and that no special technological skills were necessary for a teacher to do so.

Student C2

This class marks the first time Student C2 has experienced ClassDojo. She usually gets positive points in ClassDojo and does not recall ever having received a negative point. Student

C2 feels that positive points are a way that teachers can communicate to students that they are doing well. This obviously would include doing well as far as behavior, but she also feels that it is a way for a teacher to simply tell a student that they are excelling in class. One thing that was interesting about Student C2's view of ClassDojo was why her teacher probably started using it. When asked why her teacher probably started using ClassDojo, she said, "I think because like a lot of teachers at this school use it, so that maybe she would use it too." So to her, her teacher probably uses ClassDojo simply to be like the other teachers at the school.

Student C2 did not see any necessary correlation between better behavior and better academics. "Well, I think it's just like points on that app." For her, the benefits of ClassDojo are limited to behavioral aspects.

While Student C2 did not see any connection between better behavior and better academics, she did see a need for having necessary technology to properly implement ClassDojo. This technology consists of a mobile device, a projector, a computer, and speakers. This combination of technological hardware allows the teacher to easily move about the room in such a way as to make the implementation of ClassDojo most effective. Ease of use was a recurrent theme in that Student C2 mentioned that a teacher need not prepare anything in order to use ClassDojo. Rather, she could simply show up and start class. It would be acceptable to sign in to ClassDojo during class and get ready to start using it. One thing that is important, however, is the use of ClassDojo's sounds or visual as the program might be rendered useless without them.

Student C3

This is the first time Student C3 has been in a classroom where ClassDojo is being used. She usually gets positive points and finds them to be rewarding. She believes there to be a two-way relationship between positive points and good behavior. On the one hand, good behavior

earns one positive points. On the other hand, positive points can also lead to better behavior because it motivates students to be even better. The positive points are not the end in and of themselves, however. Student C3 tries to get positive points because they lead to rewards from the teacher.

She has received negative points in the past and recalls them bringing out emotions of anger, disappointment, and shame. Her anger and disappointment are due to the fact that she feels negative points indicate that she is not trying hard enough. Negative points also, however, communicate that she did something wrong and so she feels ashamed to have done so. While negative points bring about these undesirable emotions, there are also some advantages to receiving them. Student C3 feels that negative points help to get her back on task and remind her that she needs to change. This is true whether she is the one who received the negative or someone else in her class did "because like when kids hear the bad um sound then they'll think it's them and everybody will get on task."

While Student C3 likes getting positive points because of the rewards that are associated with them, one of the reasons she really likes ClassDojo is the fact that it helps students focus. She sees ClassDojo, though, as primarily a classroom management tool that is meant to communicate students' behaviors (both to the students and to their parents). This need for communicating behaviors to students is not the end, however, for Student C3. Rather, it is a means to the end of training students how to act when a principal comes in the room. When asked why she thought her teacher used ClassDojo, she said, "Like to be prepared just in case if um a principal comes in and to make sure they're not distracting and they're on—focused on our test or on anything else they're doing, independent."

Student C3 believes that ClassDojo works best during individual work. During group work, it can be difficult for a teacher to know who was the off-task student of the group. As such, individual work lends itself more toward effective use of ClassDojo. She also noticed a connection between one's behavior as measured by ClassDojo and the grades one receives (albeit, an indirect one). She believes that the more negative points one receives, the more likely they are to receive lower grades, whereas a student who gets a lot of positive points is more likely to receive higher grades. This is due to the fact that multiple negative points can cause a person to get so focused on their sad state of affairs that they get distracted from actually paying attention in the class. This lack of focus on the curriculum would then lead to earning worse grades.

Regarding technology, Student C3 saw mobile technology as preferred and mentioned the need for teachers to have a computer, a mobile device, and a projector for the ideal implementation of ClassDojo. She finds the audio and visual components of ClassDojo to be essential and the lack thereof to result in an ineffective ClassDojo. With the visual that ClassDojo provides, students "know if they're being doing good in class and if they're not. So they can ask the teacher why that happened and why do they have negative points, yeah." Likewise, the audio feature of ClassDojo can also be effective, but it is possible that it can distract students from the content at hand if the noises are too loud or too frequent. Student C3 feels that ClassDojo does not take much, if any, preparation before class and that just about any teacher could implement it. The only technological skill necessary to implement ClassDojo well is for one to have a working knowledge of computers.

Student C4

Student C4 had her first encounter with ClassDojo last year in her previous teacher's classroom. She speaks of that experience positively. Both in her last class and this one, she usually gets positive points. These points make her feel good and also make her feel like a role model as she sees other students sit up a little straighter after she receives a positive point "…'cause then other kids might want to like join in the group and they wanna answer questions." Another reason Student C4 likes getting positive points is because they help her to learn the content. This is due to the increased amount of attention she gives to the subject and the more engaged she is when she receives positive points. While she does not admit that it could happen to her, Student C4 can imagine a scenario in which a student does not behave well because they have so many positive points that they are not worried about losing one or two.

Negative points, on the other hand, cause a different emotion and reaction. While she cannot remember a specific time where she received a negative point, Student C4 remembers feeling disappointed upon receiving them. This disappointment is coupled with shame at the thought of having done something wrong. As such, and in order to avoid this situation, Student C4 takes someone else's negative point as a caution to make sure that her behavior is correct. Not only is this true of her, but she feels the whole class acts this way. "'Cause some students get um sad when they like start getting negative points, so they like start behaving better."

Outside of the routine of earning and receiving points, Student C4 finds there to be a great many benefits of using ClassDojo. First, it keeps a classroom quieter than it otherwise would be. When explaining unfortunate situations that the use of ClassDojo can avoid, she said that "some students just blurt out the answer and I don't like it when they do that 'cause then you may forget what you were gonna say." Another benefit of ClassDojo is the fact that it provides

an avenue for teachers to communicate with parents. Finally, it helps off-task students. In fact, Student C4 feels she has seen a drastic change in some of the problematic students in her class since the introduction of ClassDojo in the middle of the year. “Some students are bad and they get bad grades and when ClassDojo appeared in our class, they were all listening and they started giving answers.”

When discussing the contexts in which ClassDojo is most effective, Student C4 felt that group work was the best. At least partly due to the sounds that ClassDojo makes, group work lends itself to the effective use of ClassDojo “because they will learn how to behave when they're in groups and they hear the Dojo sound.” Another context in which ClassDojo is quite useful is when no students care to participate. In this situation, the teacher can use the randomizer component of ClassDojo to call on someone. Student C4 found this to be an especially useful component of ClassDojo. “Like if they don’t wanna raise their hand, she could just choose a random and they would have to answer it.”

While she could not pinpoint exactly how much of a connection there was between better behavior and better academics or how direct this connection was, Student C4 was sure there was a connection of some sort. This was likely due to the increased engagement rate on behalf of the student. The receiving of points through ClassDojo makes it “so they could pay attention in class and they could not miss anything that was important.” This then likely leads to students getting better grades.

Student C4 felt that it was important for teachers to use mobile technology in their implementation of ClassDojo since mobile technology allows them to walk around the room more easily. She listed a computer, a projector, and speakers as the necessary equipment to implement ClassDojo well. The speakers were likely the most important feature to her as she

mentioned the power that the ClassDojo audio component has. The sounds that ClassDojo makes really cause students to quiet down "because they'll kinda learn that who's getting the points and sometimes if there's a negative, they'll be like, 'Oh someone got a point tooken away.'" This audible reminder of the fact that one student lost a point would cause other students to pay more attention and behave better.

Student C4 does not recall any technological issues that have arisen from the use of ClassDojo. While she said that one has to be technologically savvy to implement it in the classroom, she also felt that just about anyone could do it. With only needing five minutes or less to get ClassDojo ready, it is also a very easy system to implement, according to Student C4. The only real expertise a person needs is the ability to work with computers.

Participants' Individual Structural Descriptions

The following individual structural descriptions tell the context(s) in which each individual participant experienced the phenomenon. These descriptions arose from the verbatim interview and focus group transcripts as well as the participants' individual textural descriptions, all of which have been previously explained. Participants' individual structural descriptions were written using the textural descriptions and imaginative variation (Moustakas, 1994).

Teacher A

The impetus for Teacher A to try out ClassDojo was a disdain for the other options available to her for calling on students equitably. She felt that equity sticks were "lame." ClassDojo offered her a way to provide something fun for her students (as well as herself), while still honoring the prevailing theory of her professors that some sort of equitable way of calling on students was to be desired in the classroom.

While she initially tried ClassDojo due to a lack of other viable options for equitably calling on students, what continues to drive her is her desire to be ever-evolving. As a self-proclaimed "gold star seeker," Teacher A is always looking for ways to improve her craft of teaching. She is always looking to the future and how she might take her teaching to the next level. ClassDojo has been a way for her to do that. While she only started using the randomization capabilities of ClassDojo, she later learned of its classroom management features. This brought excitement as she saw value in the feature as well as an opportunity for her to grow and evolve in her teaching capabilities.

This cycle repeated itself when she learned of the messenger feature where she could contact parents. This feature brought about further excitement as she realized two things. First, she knew that this would be a benefit to her in having a quick and effective way to communicate. Second, and more importantly, she realized that this would be a way for her to excel and grow in her pedagogy and to try something new. This desire to "try new things" is a characteristic that she feels her administrators look for, but more importantly it is what drives and motivates her. As a self-starter and over achiever, she is driven most by this desire to be the best that she can be. ClassDojo has afforded her the opportunity to continually strive toward that goal.

Another motivating factor for Teacher A in using ClassDojo as a classroom management tool is the ability it offers for her to communicate and connect with students regarding their behavior. She is often concerned that she is not supporting her students enough in their social-emotional development. ClassDojo offers her an opportunity to publicly recognize students for their responsibility and behavior. She does this by simply verbalizing when students receive points in order to point that out to the whole class, as well as by printing out and giving students certificates for their good behavior. This simply makes her feel good as she desires to boost

students' self-esteem, but feels that she lacks the tools within herself to do so. ClassDojo offers her an avenue through which to accomplish this.

As is often the case with individuals who are over achievers, Teacher A can tend to get burned out by constantly seeking ways to improve and to excel in her pedagogy. At times, ClassDojo can feel like a burden because it is "just another thing." "And so, it kind of—it's hard for me, I find, when I'm doing a lecture kind of a lesson—to like stop and do the Dojo points because it's just another thing that I'm trying to manage." Nevertheless, in typical over achiever fashion, Teacher A forges ahead and continues to use ClassDojo, convinced that the benefits (to both her students individually as well as the general class culture) far outweigh any drawbacks. "I actually wish I would use it more. Um, because I'll get through the end of the week and I'll be like, 'Oh, I didn't do—you know I should've used it on that.'" This desire to be always progressing and always improving coupled with a deep-seeded belief that ClassDojo is really helpful for students drives Teacher A to continue implementing ClassDojo as a classroom management tool and to continually seek new ways of using it in the classroom.

Teacher B

After spending just a short time with Teacher B, one can easily see that so much of her teaching and classroom management style is affected by her difficult experience during her first year of teaching. When she was faced with students who would not listen to her and was unable to find a classroom management system that worked, it altered her view of what it meant to manage a classroom. Multiple times in our conversations, she mentioned the need for students to be quiet. In fact, it seemed as if quietness was equated to being a good student in her class. While this is not an uncommon view amongst teachers, there are obviously circumstances in which quietness is not desirable. Yet, it was not evident from interviewing Teacher B that this

possibility was allowed for. Rather, it seemed that students had to be quiet in order to be deemed as good, behaving students.

Another prevailing theme that emerged from interviews with Teacher B was how important it was that ClassDojo was easy. She mentioned how easy ClassDojo was to use over 10 times. This ease of use is a real selling point for Teacher B. In fact, it was the number one reason for which she recommended it to multiple other teachers. It would seem that the reason this easiness is so important to Teacher B also stems back to her experience with those difficult students in her first year of teaching. At that time she found it so difficult to keep control of a class with any classroom management strategy that she tried, that finding an easy solution seemed like such a relief.

Perhaps the most evident theme that emerged with Teacher B is the perceived importance of students' being able to hear the sounds that ClassDojo makes. While Teacher B could have taken or left the visual image that ClassDojo provides where students get to see their point tallies, the audio was absolutely essential to her. In reference to the difference between speaking out loud about who was losing points and allowing ClassDojo to simply make the sounds for the whole class, Teacher B said, "I know which way is more effective and I can just start taking points away and they hear it and then they get quiet, or I can give a bunch of points and they hear it and get quiet." In the initial interview, Teacher B mentioned the importance of the audio 16 times. It would seem that her enthusiasm about ClassDojo's sound is rooted once again in that bad experience as a first-year teacher. When no classroom management system would work to keep her difficult students quiet, she suddenly tried ClassDojo. It was effective for her and she attributed it to the only thing that seemed markedly different from the other classroom

management systems she had tried—sounds heard throughout the classroom when a student was good or bad.

Teacher C

Teacher C's experience with ClassDojo is centered on her first two years of teaching. Like so many other educators, Teacher C experienced some difficulty with trying to get used to what it is like to teach full-time in a classroom. Often that experience involves feeling overwhelmed and looking for support from others while trying to figure oneself out and how one wants to run a classroom, as well as which procedures/routines one wants to implement. This was true for Teacher C as well. In her first year, she felt that taking on ClassDojo would be too difficult in light of all the other obligations involved with being a full-time teacher. What was very interesting, however, is the fact that once she had completed the first year, she did not start the next year by implementing ClassDojo. Rather, she continued to use more familiar classroom management techniques and it was not until later in the year that she felt the need to use ClassDojo because "I felt like my management was becoming a little stagnant, and I needed to switch things up a little bit."

One very noticeable trait about Teacher C was her desire to improve and perfect her use of ClassDojo. While this is of course part of being a new teacher, a lot of the reason may be attributed to the fact that she has only been implementing ClassDojo for six weeks. As with any new strategy (especially technological ones), it is very common to make adjustments in the beginning of implementation. Nevertheless, it seems to go deeper than this, since Teacher C offered so many ideas on how to progress with ClassDojo and especially when one considers how out-of-the-box some of the ideas were (such as a Picture-in-Picture feature on a projector screen). These types of comments make one think that Teacher C is simply a very reflective

individual who enjoys tweaking things and perfecting them. This personality type may have a great deal to do with how contemplative she is in her desire to progress in her use of ClassDojo.

Teacher C made a very interesting comment when discussing situations in which she feels like she forgets to use ClassDojo. She mentioned that when she does, students often remind her that she has forgotten and that she feels guilty. This guilt surprised me and, as such, I asked a follow-up question to find out what was the source of her guilt. She explained that when she forgets to use ClassDojo, students feel short-changed. She mentioned that her feeling this way has to do with the fact that if students feel short-changed, they will not buy into the classroom management tool as much, which will lessen its effect. Generally, however, that would not lead to a sense of guilt, but something more like regret. It seems very plausible, however, that part of the reason for this guilt is the fact that Teacher C is such a reflective individual and she feels like she has failed to execute the plan over which she had poured herself previously.

One of the main reasons Teacher C gives for starting to use ClassDojo is the fact that her school is highly focused on PBIS. In her informal evaluation of herself and her teaching, she decided that she needed to do a better job at providing positive feedback to students. She felt that ClassDojo would be a good tool to help her do that. While she denies the fact that administrators' views would influence her decision of whether or not to use a particular strategy or tool in her classroom, there is at least an indirect connection between her perceived need to become better at positive feedback (as suggested by administration to the whole staff) and her use of ClassDojo. This is clear when she speaks of things teachers at that school are obliged to do: "That's what we're supposed to be focusing on is accentuating the positive things that our students are doing versus harping on them about all the negatives." Nevertheless, she feels the need to be positive with students outside of any demands from administration: "I think all kids wanna be

acknowledged for the good things that they do." In her mind ClassDojo stands or falls based on its effectiveness (or lack thereof) in the classroom (as well as in students' general well-being in life). She does not feel that any other factor heavily influences her decision of whether or not to use ClassDojo.

Student A1

Student A1 is very motivated. She is motivated to behave well in class for multiple reasons. She seems to have a desire to please. This drives her behavior. She desires to behave well in order to please her teacher. More than this, though, there is a desire to please her parents. One almost gets the sense that she feels she needs to prove herself to her parents. She explained that "your parents actually know you're paying attention 'cause it's not just like you're saying, 'Yeah I'm doing good in class.' They actually believe you're doing good in that class." This statement seemed to indicate a lack of trust between she and her parents which was confirmed by a later statement. Of her parents, she said, "so they won't say that you're kind of lying 'cause—you know sometimes it would be hard for them to believe you…." Whether or not she feels she needs to prove herself to her parents, ClassDojo affords her the opportunity for her parents to see her behavior in class and she enjoys that it offers that.

One of the most interesting things Student A1 said was that she did not mind getting negative points. She saw those times as opportunities to grow. She saw negative points as a wakeup call telling her that she had erred and was off-track, and that she needed to correct herself. She also mentioned that negative points were an opportunity to see that the teacher really knew she was in the room and cared about her behavior. While she did not like the idea of disappointing the teacher, something about receiving a negative point was nevertheless motivating to her.

Connected to this idea of feeling comforted by not becoming a number lost in the crowd was the notion that it was necessary for the teacher to walk around the room to see all the behaviors that were exhibited at any given time. This ability is very important to Student A1. As such, she mentioned how much more beneficial using ClassDojo with mobile technology is compared to stationary technology. The importance of the ability to walk the room that is granted by the use of mobile technology cannot be overstated according to Student A1. This is likely connected to her need to be noticed. Another very important technological requirement is the use of a visual to display how many points students have. Student A1 is in a silent competition with other students regarding who can get the most points. This might be connected to her need to please. While she wants to please her parents and her teacher, she also has a desire to please herself and meet personal goals. As such, she competes with other students for the most points in the class.

Student A2

Much of Student A2's experience with ClassDojo is shaped by his desire to please adults—namely his teachers and parents. While some of his motivation comes from an intrinsic desire to beat others in his silent competition for ClassDojo points, his desire to be viewed as a good kid by his teacher and his parents is likely the largest driving force. Were he to get a negative point, he would feel embarrassed, not in front of the students because he had lost footing in his silent competition with them, but in front of the teacher because he had let her down.

While Student A2 mentioned the intrinsic benefit of knowing that he was beating other students in his silent competition, he was just as much motivated by the pride that comes with knowing that he has done the right thing and that he can hold his head up high for the day. This

attitude may stem from an extension of his desire to please adults in that he also desires to please himself and to have pride in himself and his efforts.

Somewhat true to his respect for (and desire to please) adults, Student A2 could not think of a way to implement ClassDojo other than how his teacher was already doing so. When allowed to imagine any possible technology (without consideration for cost) that would make ClassDojo effective, he simply listed that which his teacher was already using. That being said, he did weight the need for technological skills a little more heavily than most in admitting that there were at least a few older teachers who might have difficulty implementing it well.

Overall, Student A2's experience with ClassDojo has allowed him an opportunity to have concrete evidence of whether or not he has pleased the teacher (and as a result, his parents). When he receives a positive point, he knows that he has made his teacher happy and continues to do those same things. When he receives a negative point, he is embarrassed by the fact that he made his teacher disappointed in him. This motivates him to find out what went wrong and start mimicking the behaviors that once earned him positive points.

Student A3

One of the biggest motivating factors for using ClassDojo for Student A3 is the sense of pride she feels in being a role model. She mentioned the fact that receiving positive points in ClassDojo is affirming to her because she feels in that moment like the teacher is telling her that she is being a positive role model for the other students. As an All Student Body (ASB) member, she feels the need to be a leader for positivity and good behavior. ClassDojo is what gives her the affirmation needed to know that she is achieving those goals. While some teachers may allow her good behavior to go unnoticed, ClassDojo is the quick affirmation that she needs to tell her she is on the right track toward those goals as she goes throughout her day. On the other hand, when

she receives negative points, she is distraught. While part of this is due to the fact that she is simply disappointed in herself (and her lack of being a good role model for others), most of her despair is due to the fact that she has let the teacher down (and perhaps even been disrespectful to the teacher). This is not acceptable for someone of her training and caliber (within ASB). A little of her personal side is revealed when Student A3 explains how she views ClassDojo as a silent competition, in which she enjoys trying to beat the other students in how many points she can attain.

As a conscientious, community-minded individual, Student A3 especially appreciates ClassDojo's ability to allow the teacher to communicate with students from home. This way when there is an upcoming assignment or a change to the date of a test, the teacher can get the message as quickly as possible to the students so that they can start studying right away. While Student A3 sees the responsibility of an assignment to be completed as reason enough to be motivated, other students do not always feel the same way. As such, when ClassDojo is not being used in the classroom and classmates start to get off-task, Student A3 gets frustrated at the fact that these distracting students are not receiving their just recompense—a negative point. On the other hand, there are times when ClassDojo is not being used and Student A3 does not even notice because all students are behaving themselves and the classroom is quiet.

Student A3 identified a projector, a projector screen, a computer, a mobile device, and perhaps a SMART Board as necessary for the ideal implementation of ClassDojo. This happened to also be what her teacher currently uses in her implementation of the system. Flexibility is tantamount for Student A3 and, as such, she sees the need for mobile technology as great, so that the teacher can choose whether to sit down or move about the classroom. Ultimately, Student A3

has had a wonderful experience with ClassDojo and would wish it to be in all her friends' classes.

Student A4

Student A4 is a very goal-oriented, driven student. He has his own goals for himself and focuses intently on accomplishing them. His goals regarding ClassDojo are two-fold: (1) to get the biggest, best extrinsic rewards offered by his teacher as often as possible and (2) to beat all his classmates/friends by having more ClassDojo points than them at the end of the competition. All his excitement and disappointment for ClassDojo are related to these two goals. If he receives a positive point, it drives him to maintain the same behavior since he is getting closer to his goal(s). When he gets a negative point, on the other hand, he recognizes that as a reminder/opportunity to turn his behavior around in order to get a positive point. He is driven to do this not by any sense of obligation to a teacher or a parent or even out of self-respect, but simply because doing so gets him closer to his goal of grander rewards and higher standing in his silent competition with his classmates.

While he recognizes ClassDojo as primarily a classroom management tool and realizes that his teacher uses it for that purpose, he is not interested in thinking about what the best implementation of ClassDojo is or how to improve its implementation in the classroom. He is simply concerned with what he needs to do to beat his friends and earn better rewards. This is evident in his views on what technology is necessary to implement ClassDojo. While he was perfectly content with the technology that his teacher currently uses, the only additional thing of which he could think was a video camera that would catch more behavior so that students would earn more points. He viewed necessary teacher technological skills the same way. He did not

seem to care what technological skills were necessary as those issues were peripheral to his goal(s) of more points and better rewards.

Student B1

Student B1 is a soft-spoken, well-adjusted girl who just wants to please those in authority over her. Having received many positive points and no negative points in ClassDojo, she could not really even imagine the reality of receiving a negative point. The thought of this reality had nothing to do with the personal pain she would feel by being further from her goal of having the most points in the class, but it was so unthinkable simply because she did not want to do anything wrong. More than that, her desire to be the best that she can be and to take her school work seriously motivates her to do well with ClassDojo. She perceives negative points on ClassDojo as an indication that one is not paying proper attention and not retaining the concepts that one should. Likewise, positive points are an indication that a person is smart and is diligently working in the class. To her, the notion of behaving in a way that would get a negative point is unthinkable because she is so intent on doing her best and excelling in school.

Because of this belief that positive points are inextricably linked with one's intelligence, Student B1 perceives there to be a strong connection between one's behavior in class and their academics. Just as positive points are an indication that a person is smart, so do positive points indicate that a person is getting (or will get) a good grade in the class. This connection is supported by the fact that positive points cause a student to be more engaged in the class and the learning activities that are taking place.

As if perfectly fitting the mold of an over-achieving, compliant pupil, Student B1's description of an effective implementation of ClassDojo matches perfectly with the current way that her teacher is implementing it. Whatever technology her teacher uses to implement

ClassDojo is *ipso facto* the same technology that would provide the best implementation of the program. This is evident in her answer regarding whether a ClassDojo visual would enhance the implementation of ClassDojo. In her response, she does not allow herself to think outside her current experience to determine whether or not this added feature would be helpful, but quickly replies, “No, because there’s always like this noise on her phone when she like adds a point and deducts a point.” It would seem that in whatever she does, Student B1 wants to be compliant and a good student.

Student B2

Student B2 is currently in two classes that use ClassDojo as a classroom management tool. As such, she sees the different ways that teachers implement the same system and can appreciate how Teacher B has been so kind with the extrinsic rewards that she attaches to ClassDojo points. Student B2 greatly appreciates these rewards (and Teacher B, as a result). That being said, she is not totally motivated by ClassDojo points as are some other students. While she appreciates the value of the points as well as the ability to silently compete with her classmates, Student B2 is perhaps more motivated by her desire to be social. She enjoys being around her friends and talking with them to the point that sometimes (such as during group work), she does not really worry so much about earning as many points as possible. While she declares that she is in a silent competition with one of her friends form another of Teacher B’s class periods, group work affords her the ability to talk with her friends and socialize. This supersedes any opportunity she may have to earn points and beat her friend from another class period.

Nevertheless, Student B2 is not completely ruled by her social desires. While she enjoys this aspect of Teacher B’s classroom, she also recognizes that the points given through

ClassDojo can have a greater impact than the here and now. She admits that positive points in ClassDojo cause her to remember that she should not misbehave as well as to refocus her on the task at hand. As such, she feels that her grades improve when she gets points because she has constant reminders to pay attention and try her best.

Student B2 is also motivated by technology in general. Having a smartphone herself, Student B2 downloaded the ClassDojo app because she simply likes to check into the app and see how she is doing with the points in Teacher B's class. She also enjoys the privileges that are offered by technology in that this system can be carried outside when her class gets to do a Math or Science activity outside the four walls of the classroom.

Student B3

Student B3 is new to ClassDojo, but it has not taken her long to decide that she enjoys it and to come up with good things to say about ClassDojo when she refers friends. She is primarily interested in how cute and fun it is (especially as it relates to the creation and customization of the avatars). In fact, she is so enthralled with the cuteness and fun factor of avatars, that when asked why she likes getting positive points, she responded with a seemingly unrelated answer: "Well I just think that the noises are funny too and you get to customize your own little character. I haven't done that yet but I think it's cute."

Other than this like for ClassDojo due to how cute and funny it is, Student B3 is motivated by the rewards that her teacher gives through her use of ClassDojo. In fact, rewards are so motivating for her that if she were to get a negative point (which, of course, takes her further from rewards), she would question the validity of having received the point. "I would feel suspicious…" because it is unthinkable to Student B3 that she could have possibly done something that would take her further from getting a reward.

Student B3 saw a connection between one's behavior in class (as affected by ClassDojo) and the grade one is able to achieve. Nevertheless, she was not able to determine how or why this connection existed. She was blissfully aware that a connection existed without any need to try to determine the reason for the connection. She was simply happy that her teacher was using a cute, fun program that resulted in her getting rewards.

Because most of Student B3's motivation for liking ClassDojo comes from the fact that ClassDojo is cute and fun, she is an advocate of students being able to see their avatars during class. While she recognizes that the sounds that ClassDojo makes are most effective for bringing about changed behavior in students, she also desires to have the visual displayed, likely due to the aesthetics of the avatar characters. Because her view of ClassDojo is so intertwined with how cute and fun it is, she does not seem to care too much for what the best or most effective implementation of the program is. She thinks that mobile technology is just as effective as stationary, but finds mobile technology to be slightly easier.

Student B4

Student B4 is new to ClassDojo, but it has not taken her long to formulate her opinion about it. Much of her opinion is embedded in her definition of classroom management and how a teacher should control a class. To her a quiet classroom is a controlled classroom and the mark of an effective teacher. As such, she feels that ClassDojo is effective because it really quiets students down. This mainly comes from the fact that ClassDojo has sounds that it makes when students receive a negative point. These sounds help remind students that they are getting too loud and that they need to fix their behavior.

Student B4's view that quietness is ideal in a classroom is evidenced by her comments about the best context for ClassDojo. On the one hand, she believes that ClassDojo works best

during group work because it affords the opportunity for students to remind their fellow group members to be quiet. On the other hand, she feels that it is less effective at this time because usually during group work one is expected to talk with those in their group. As such, how can ClassDojo work at keeping students quiet if students are encouraged at this time to participate and talk. “I think it’s not really useful when, in like group works because we’re talking. How are we going to quiet down if we need to talk? It’s still gonna be a little noisy.” Because Student B4 felt that ClassDojo was all about keeping students quiet, postulating about any academic benefits was somewhat difficult for her. When forced to think about it, however, she felt that there might be a slight academic benefit from ClassDojo. Again, this was due to the fact that students are more quiet with ClassDojo, which she believed would help them stay on task more and get better grades.

Any necessary technology for implementing ClassDojo also comes back to how effective it is at keeping students quiet. Student B4 felt the need for mobile devices in implementing ClassDojo because these devices allowed for one to give students positive or negative points much easier when the teacher was across the classroom. The sounds that go off with the giving of these points were deemed to be effective at quieting students down, which therefore accomplished the purpose which the teacher seeks.

Student C1

This is Student C1’s first time experiencing ClassDojo and it has not taken him very long to realize that he likes it a great deal. Much of his motivation for being in favor of ClassDojo comes back to the notion of using class time effectively. Student C1 takes his studies seriously to the point that he is perfectly fine with the idea of getting a negative point since it reminds him that he is not trying his best to learn at that moment in time. Since this ideal is so important to

him, he is happy with any strategy or program that promises to reduce the amount of time that a teacher is dealing with misbehaviors and increase the amount of time that she is teaching. He has found that in ClassDojo. Instead of a teacher having to stop a lesson to correct multiple behaviors, she is now able to quickly assign points, saving precious time for learning. Although, everyone makes mistakes. In these times, Student C1 is sure to recognize any potential negative point he receives as an opportunity to be reminded that he is currently off-task and is not taking full advantage of the education that is being offered to him.

Because so much of Student C1's beliefs about ClassDojo are wrapped up in the saving of instructional time due to how quickly ClassDojo can be administered, he is caught up in the need for the best technology to implement this program well. This consists of anything that can allow the teacher to act more quickly with behavior in order to save time for the important things—instructional minutes. One outworking of this belief is the opinion that mobile technology is faster and easier for implementing ClassDojo—and therefore superior.

Another motivating factor for Student C1 is his desire for competition. Although he could value positive points as intrinsically rewarding or at least good for purchasing prizes, instead he focuses on them more as a way of competing with his fellow classmates. Of course, the competition consists of seeing who can be a better, more studious pupil.

Student C2

Student C2 is highly motivated by a desire to please the teacher. She feels that positive points are a way for a teacher to tell a student that the student is behaving and doing the right thing. Conversely, negative points are an opportunity for the teacher to tell the students that they are not only misbehaving, but not doing well in the course. This seems to be her only rationale for getting positive points and avoiding negative ones—to keep from hearing the teacher tell her

(albeit silently through ClassDojo) that she is not doing well in the class. Perhaps because of her desire to please her teacher and not question however her teacher chooses to implement ClassDojo, Student C2 has not imagined any use for ClassDojo beyond how her teacher has used it. This becomes evident when Student C2 does not find any connection between better behavior and better academics despite basically equating those two things in her explanation of what it means to get positive points—to hear the teacher say that she is doing well in the course. This notion of compliance with the teacher's preferences and decisions is also evident in the technology that Student C2 feels necessary to implement ClassDojo well. Her view of necessary technology to properly implement ClassDojo seems to be a one-to-one correspondence with what technology her teacher uses.

Student C3

Most of what shapes Student C3's view of ClassDojo is the extent to which it does or does not allow a student to focus. She mentioned on multiple occasions the fact that ClassDojo helps students to focus through its normal operation. At the same time, however, she also mentioned the fact that sometimes multiple negative points can actually distract a student due to the fact that the student might be so focused on having received the negative points that he would be kept from focusing on the curriculum. These issues of whether or not a student can focus arose multiple times throughout one interview.

Being able to focus on the curriculum is not the only thing connected to points, though. Rather, points are valuable and demonstrate purchasing ability for the rewards in the classroom. This purchasing ability drives Student C3 to attempt to get as many positive points as possible and to avoid negative ones at all cost. Furthermore, points are connected to the grades one receives in the class. According to Student C3, the more positive points, the more likely it is for a

person to receive good grades. Likewise, the more negative points one has, the more likely they are to receive a poor grade. This, again is due to their ability to focus. If a person receives a bunch of negative points, Student C3 presumes that the student would not be able to focus because they were worried about how many negative points they had. This inability to focus in relation to how many negative points a person has is of utmost importance to Student C3.

Student C4

Student C4 is not new to ClassDojo. She has been around it for a couple years. Her main motivation for enjoying ClassDojo comes from intrinsic reward. She mentioned two main benefits of the points that are awarded in ClassDojo. First, it keeps students from blurting things out, which can be distracting to her. Second, it helps her to remember to behave in class, which then causes her to learn more. These intrinsic rewards that ClassDojo provides are enough to satisfy Student C4 and to sell her on the benefits of using the program. In fact, in our entire interview together, she never mentioned anything about the extrinsic rewards that her teacher offers for getting a lot of ClassDojo points.

All the benefits of ClassDojo that Student C4 mentioned came back to the intrinsic reward that the program offers her. She mentioned the fact that problematic students in the class are quieter now. This is a perceived benefit because it allows her to focus more on achieving in the class. She also mentioned that the use of ClassDojo just generally quiets a classroom down. Again, this is a benefit to her ability to focus and pay attention and get everything possible out of her educational experience. In discussing another benefit of ClassDojo—that it communicates to parents how their student is doing—Student C4 still couched the conversation in an intrinsic benefit to her. She mentioned that problematic students' parents probably "…got mad at them…" which presumably leads to them behaving better and not interfering with Student C4's education.

Every perceived benefit of ClassDojo comes back to an intrinsic reward that she receives (mainly focused on her ability to learn more because other students are not distracting her.

Because Student C4's main concern is ensuring that other students are not loud and are not interfering with her education, she really enjoys the sounds that ClassDojo makes. She perceives these sounds as being very effective in keeping students from disrupting the class. The sounds are reminders to students (herself included) that they should be on task. As such, they keep students from interfering with her learning. Therefore, she finds the audio portion of ClassDojo to be indispensable.

Composite Textural-Structural Description

After the Individual Textural and Structural Descriptions have been composed, Moustakas (1994) calls for a focus on the entire group of participants. This includes synthesizing all descriptions "to develop a synthesis of the meanings and essences of the phenomenon or experience" (p. 181). With this in mind, I investigated and analyzed all the data for the 15 participants as well as the Individual Descriptions I had written to compose a Composite Textural-Structural Description. Before doing this, however, it was important to make sure that I was moving forward with correct data. As such, once the individual textural and structural descriptions were written, I gave them to their respective participants in order to have them perform member checks. Through this process of member checks, participants were able to "review statements in the report for accuracy and completeness" (Gall *et al.*, 2007, p. 475). With member checks complete, I was able to move on to the Composite Textural-Structural Synthesis.

Regarding views of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool, participants all found it to be "effective." Much of the reason for this can be attributed to the fact that students greatly desire the points that can be obtained within ClassDojo. Some seek the benefit of extrinsic

rewards and “prizes” that can be purchased and others seek the intrinsic benefit of knowing they have beaten the other students in the class in a “silent competition” for points, while still others simply get a sense of “pride” in knowing that they have done the right thing. Whatever the individual reasons, students desire to get positive points in ClassDojo and refrain from getting negative ones. This desire leads students to behave as well as they possibly can. It causes them to recognize points for someone else as a reminder that their own behavior needs to be reevaluated.

While all participants agree that there are contexts in which ClassDojo is generally more useful, not every participant agrees on which context that is. Some feel that individual work lends itself better to the use of ClassDojo, while others feel that ClassDojo is more useful during group work. Whatever the preferred context of ClassDojo, participants feel that it is always useful to one degree or another.

Perhaps one of the most important benefits of ClassDojo is the connection between the points awarded in the system and the ensuing engagement rate of the students. Many participants feel that ClassDojo causes students to be so concerned about exhibiting the behaviors necessary to receive points that they end up being much more engaged in class. Because students are so focused on exhibiting the behaviors that the teacher deems acceptable, they report being so focused in class that they are able to retain more of the information that is presented. This leads to a better understanding of the content, which results in better grades and higher academic achievement according to the participants.

Because of the power that ClassDojo has to remind students how important it is for them to be on their best behavior, the audio and visual components of ClassDojo become so important. The image that can be projected through ClassDojo’s website is a constant reminder of how many points each student in the class currently has. When students receive a point, a visual cue

appears on the screen reminding that student (and everyone in the class) what their behavior was and what type of point they received (positive or negative). Likewise, the noises that ClassDojo makes are immediate feedback to students regarding the fact that someone's behavior was either ideal or unacceptable. This "immediate" feedback that can be seen or heard by everyone in the class causes students to "quiet down" and behave.

Since "immediate" communication between teachers and students regarding students' behavior is an integral component of ClassDojo, all participants feel that a mobile device is necessary for the ideal implementation of ClassDojo. This mobile device allows teachers to walk around the room while not sacrificing their ability to immediately give feedback on any potential behavior that their students might exhibit. Furthermore, participants feel that a computer attached to speakers and/or a projector are necessary to implement this system well, since the benefits of ClassDojo's audio and/or visual components are among the most important features the program offers.

Despite the fact that participants state the need to have certain technological devices in order to implement ClassDojo well, they do not feel that there is much of a need for past technological experience(s) for the teacher in order to operate ClassDojo. Simply a basic knowledge of how to operate a computer is sufficient in order to implement ClassDojo well.

The teacher participants perceive that their administrators think more highly of them as teachers due to their use of ClassDojo. This improved view of the teachers, however, is not attributed merely to the fact that the teachers are using technology more (or at all). Rather, each teacher perceives their administrator as having their own reason for approving of the teacher's use of ClassDojo. Whatever the case, though, none of the teacher participants use ClassDojo because of any perceived benefit regarding their administrators' view of them.

Themes

Through the data collection and analysis processes, themes emerged around each of the individual research questions. The following section details the themes that emerged for each research question along with a representative sampling of quotations to support each theme.

Research Question One

The first Research Question focused on how teachers and students perceive the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool. Three themes emerged as a result of this. These themes are as follows:

- Participants identified with a particular motivation for students desiring positive points and generally disliking negative points.
- Participants identified multiple reasons why ClassDojo was set apart from other classroom management programs/strategies, which rendered it more effective.
- Participants identified certain context(s) in which ClassDojo worked most effectively.

Motivation for earning points.

The first theme regarding Research Question One was the fact that all students were motivated for earning ClassDojo points. While a few students did not mind getting negative points, most disliked negative points. All students, however, liked getting positive points and sought them. The reasons, however, for seeking positive points were varied. Most students sought positive points because of the extrinsic rewards that their teacher offered, while others were motivated by perceiving themselves as being in a silent competition with their fellow classmates to see who can achieve the most points. Almost every participant mentioned one of these two reasons as a motivation for seeking positive points.

Rewards.

Each of the three teacher participants mentioned offering extrinsic rewards as part of their implementation of ClassDojo. Teacher A offers certificates for the best behaved students (as measured by ClassDojo points). Teacher B and Teacher C offer coupons that can be purchased with ClassDojo points and redeemed for special prizes and special treatment in class. Most students were motivated by these rewards. When asked why she liked positive points and wanted to get more, Student B1 said the following:

> Because at the end of the year when we—she has like this raffle and she gets all my points into tickets and we write our name on the tickets, we put them in a jar and where she picks a ticket out of the jar and reads the name and we get prizes.

Likewise, when Student C3 was asked why she liked getting positive points, she simply said, "'Cause then you get a reward." Student B3 also identified with the rewards that positive points can earn when asked why she liked getting positive points, saying:

> It's fun 'cause sometimes at the end of the triad she gets a little raffle thing and so we spend our Dojo points on that—on tickets—and how many times your name gets pulled, that's how many items you get.

Ultimately, over half the students interviewed identified these extrinsic rewards and prizes as a reason for their liking ClassDojo and finding it to be effective. They identified doing things that were deemed by the teacher to be good behavior in order to obtain these prizes. This contributed to the effective management of these classrooms.

Silent competition.

The second subtheme that contributed to students being motivated to earn positive points was the fact that many students perceived themselves as being in a competition with the other

students in the classroom. This competition consists of trying to get more positive points (and therefore a higher point total) than all other students in the classroom. Students treated this as a silent competition in that there was no verbalizing of who was winning at any given time, but multiple students were trying to beat out other students in their own minds. Student A3 said the following about the silent competition:

> Yeah because—yeah because it—to me it's kinda like a cool competition between your classmates, and like it's—it um I have seven right now in science I think and math and like um other people have less and it's kinda competition. So, I think that's fun.

This competition was most prevalent in Teacher A's classroom and was an element that arose in that focus group amongst multiple students:

> Student A1: You're like, "I wanna be better and I wanna get better so I can do better than someone else and then do the little silent competition."
>
> Student A3: You get a little competitive at the same time 'cause you're like, "I'm at the top of class" and stuff like that.
>
> Student A1: And I don't want to lose to them...
>
> Student A3: ...This person, you know, and like if you're at six like [Student A2] said and [Student A4] was at five like you'd be more competitive with [Student A4].
>
> Student A1: 'Cause it's only like one point down and you're like, "I have to get one point, like one or two more points."
>
> Student A2: Like, like maybe if you did get a positive point, but let's say like between like stuff you're doing, you did like kinda talk and you got away with it, then you, then you'd realize that you could get more if you didn't even talk, just in between....

The notion also arose with Teacher C's students. Student C1 mentioned that this silent competition is his only motivation for seeking positive points. "Because it makes me feel good, you know, to get a lot of points—more than others, yeah." While the notion of a silent competition for positive points was not mentioned by any of the teachers, many students mentioned it as a reason for enjoying ClassDojo. More importantly, the students recognized this motivating factor as a reason for their complying with the classroom rules of the teacher, thereby contributing to the effective management of the classroom.

Advantages of ClassDojo.

Another theme in the responses of the participants regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool can be classified as advantages of ClassDojo over other classroom management techniques and strategies. These reasons for preferring ClassDojo are threefold: (a) ClassDojo allows for teacher mobility, (b) ClassDojo features an audio and/or visual component, and (c) ClassDojo allows for immediate response(s) to behaviors.

Teacher mobility.

One of the most prevalent reasons participants felt ClassDojo was to be preferred over and above other classroom management strategies/programs was that ClassDojo allowed the teacher to be mobile in the classroom. This mobility seemed essential to many participants. It certainly seemed essential to Teacher A:

> Um, I only recently this year started using the mobile and the desktop. I didn't even know you could do that and it was like mind-blowing to me because it changed, you know, the amount of time that I used it. Because I am not—I hate being at my back at my desk and it was just never practical, and so—and then trying to remember, "Okay this person and this person, they deserve points and then having to go back and like get it back in..." —I

> just never used it. In fact, it was only then that I really began to use it as really a behavior management um tool. Um, could you do it? Yeah, you could. Um, I think it really depends on your teaching style. I just am a mover, and so for me it wasn't very practical, but I think you could use it, it just, I don't think it would be as effective.

Teacher B felt the same way:

> Um...if they only have it on a computer and speakers, they could still use it, but they would be tethered to their computer so they wouldn't be able to be walking around as much, and I can't see them using it as mu—as often as I do having it in my hand. Um, and then if there was no speakers, probably not.

Even though Teacher C feels that she has too many things that she's trying to carry already, carrying a phone for ClassDojo is still deemed to be worthwhile because of the benefits of being mobile while implementing ClassDojo:

> …not to mention that I always feel like I'm carrying stuff so if I'm trying to check work and uh sign things off, I've got a, you know, a stamp, and a pen, and a phone, and, you know, it's just a lot for me to carry um but I feel like I need to have it in order to correct behaviors immediately.

Clearly teacher mobility is important to teachers and is therefore a benefit in favor of using ClassDojo as a classroom management tool.

While the teachers might be expected to appreciate the benefits of their own mobility, students also perceived this as a benefit for teachers. In fact, over half the students mentioned the benefit of teacher mobility when using ClassDojo. Student A1, for instance, mentioned the following:

> Well the thing is that the teacher would hafta be in the back or in the front but then they would—If they're in the front they can't see the behind of the st—like how the students are acting from the behind—like if they're like actually going like something or doing something. But you can't see it.

This ability to move about the classroom to observe the behaviors or all students in the room was a recurring theme for the students who found teacher mobility to be an important and advantageous component of ClassDojo.

Audio/Visual component of ClassDojo.

Another component of ClassDojo that participants felt made it preferable over other classroom management programs was the fact that it had both audio and visual components. In Teacher A's classroom, students are able to see how many points they have when it is displayed on the SMART Board at the front of the room on occasion. In the other two classrooms, Teacher B and Teacher C do not typically display the ClassDojo visual very often, but they both have their speakers working during class so that teachers can hear the "ding" that is made when a positive point is awarded as well as the "dong" associated with a negative point.

The effect of ClassDojo's audio and visual cues is so significant that nearly every student mentioned its impact. Student A1 said the following:

> Well we've...I think we've like kind of started going toward the sounds and it's pretty important sometimes 'cause you hear it and you know something's happening. So it's like, if it's a negative you're like, "I hope it wasn't me." So, I'll try my best.

Student B4 felt the same way, saying, "Um the points when you hear that noise, it's like stuns a person. If she does a bunch of points, everyone just like, 'Shhhh' and then it quiets down." Student B3 agreed and added, "Yeah it's like as soon as that negative point goes off, it's like

automatically silent." Teacher B felt this was an integral component of ClassDojo: "Um, and even though when students hear the dong of a point being taken away, they, they do, you can physically see them straighten up or, you know, get back to what they're doing."

Most participants felt that the audio component was more valuable than the visual component because sometimes the visual element can be distracting for students who might just sit and stare at the creative, colorful avatars. The audio element, however, is not as distracting as it is simply a quick reminder that goes away as quickly as it came. As such, the audio component of ClassDojo is one of the features that most aptly sets ClassDojo apart from other classroom management programs.

Immediate response to behavior.

Related to the idea of the effectiveness of the audio and visual components of ClassDojo is the notion that ClassDojo provides an immediate response to students' behavior. Indeed, the noises associated with ClassDojo (and perhaps the visual cue) is the mechanism that provides this immediate feedback. Teacher A explains the importance of this immediacy:

> And so, and research tells us you need to nip a behavior right when it's happening. And so, you can't tell somebody, "Okay, you're losing a point in Dojo," and then five minutes later you're actually taking the point because they don't care at that point. It has to be immediate…

The need for this immediacy is further explicated by Teacher C in her explanation of how teachers have so many things to do:

> For me, I want to do that right then when I'm thinking about it because I have too many things rolling in my brain to remember. I mean, I can barely remember what I'm

supposed to do in two hours let alone, you know, who I'm gonna give points to for, you know, the whole last hour.

Furthermore, Student C1 felt that this immediacy was so beneficial, that he was willing to receive the negative points associated with ClassDojo rather than lose the instructional time that a program lacking this immediacy would offer:

> Because uh—I would still like it [ClassDojo] 'cause it's um—'cause if you're off-task then you could get back on task, instead of her like walking over there or him walking over there and telling you like um, "Get back on task." It just wastes time. Instead of walking over there, you could just click a button and then you hear it.

Clearly the immediacy of correcting behaviors that ClassDojo offers is a valuable component in the eyes of both teachers and students alike.

The perceived benefit of the immediacy of ClassDojo is related to the notion that the points assigned in ClassDojo (whether positive or negative) effect change within the students. One of the prevailing themes among students and teachers alike was the notion that a point for one student does not just mean behavior change for that one student. Rather, a point for one student can easily affect many students in the classroom as they are reminded of the fact that they need to be on task in order to earn the positive point (or avoid the negative point). Student B4 explained this notion, saying:

> Yes. Um, I think that because when it goes "ding," you think, "Oh yes I'm getting a point." Even when it goes—makes a one that gets tooken away, even silent more—because they're like, "No I don't wanna be one of those people." And then um...and then if they heard that sound they're like, "Now I have to kinda like quiet down and now I know what to do."

Student B1 also agreed, saying, “Yes, because if someone gets like a point deducted, everybody will behave really better than the person who got the negative point.” Furthermore, Student C3 said, “Because like when kids hear the bad um sound then they’ll think it’s them and everybody will get on task.” This notion was not limited to students, however. Teacher A felt the same way:

> Well, like I said, the negative points I think it’s just kind of a reminder like, it could happen to me so I need to make sure that I’m on the right place ‘cause no one wants to be the person with the little red dot [laughter].

This is why the immediacy of ClassDojo was such an integral component of the system. Because students react so quickly to ClassDojo points (whether given to them or given to another student), it is important to both teachers and students that ClassDojo can provide the immediate feedback to students in order to quickly change the problematic behavior that students are exhibiting.

Most effective contexts.

Another theme regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool had to do with the specific contexts in which ClassDojo was most effective. Most participants felt that the use and implementation of ClassDojo was most effective at certain times within the classroom or during certain activities. These contexts in which ClassDojo was most effective were generally classified by the participants as individual work or group work.

The first type of context in which students felt ClassDojo was exceptionally effective was during individual work. Student A3 was one such participant, saying, “Well I think it works well when you’re individual, because when you’re a group you’re distracted um in your group and you’re talking and you don’t really pay attention to the screen.” Student A4 concurred saying that “it works better um in when you’re individual….When you’re in groups, you’re more likely

to mess around with your other, with your friends. When you're individual um most people would like to try to um get their work done." Student B4 also joined the ranks of those who feel individual work lends itself better to the effective use of ClassDojo, saying, "I think it works better when we're working individually because if we're working as a group then it's a little noisier and it's harder to hear the points, but it might take a little longer." Student C1 felt the same way, though perhaps for a different reason: "I think it works better when you're individual, 'cause if you're in groups like um one person might not care about it and then um they would just keep doing bad stuff. Another…monkey do, monkey see."

Nevertheless, other students felt that group work was the context in which ClassDojo could be used most effectively. Student B4 felt that group work was the best use of ClassDojo because of students' abilities to remind each other of the need to behave:

> When we're in like groups because if one of us hear it, we're all like, "Shhh" and it quiet down fast. 'Cause if you were to hear by yourself, you'd be like—and you didn't hear it, they heard it—you'd still be like talking.

Student C3 also felt this way. In trying to explain why ClassDojo is most beneficial during group work, Student C3 said the following:

> Because if one pers—like if they're all talking and then they hear the bad noise, they would all like work together again instead of like if one person were to be doing good and like three people were doing bad and they were doing all the work, and if they heard the sound they would help the other person—like they would all uh they would all get back on task to work on the project that they were doing.

Even though participants often identified one specific context as most beneficial for the implementation of ClassDojo, they also identified the program as useful to one degree or another

in any context. Student B1 certainly believed this, saying, “I feel...well, I feel everything’s useful with ClassDojo.” In trying to explain the fact that ClassDojo always has some positive effect, Student C1 said, “I think uh ClassDojo works a lot better than not having it.”

Research Question Two

Research Question Two had to do with whether and to what degree teachers and students perceive the implementation of ClassDojo to influence student achievement. While one participant chose to remain agnostic on the issue, virtually every other participant believed there to be a connection between the use of ClassDojo and academic achievement.

ClassDojo’s increased engagement means better academic achievement.

The common theme of participants’ responses to the potential connection between the use of ClassDojo and academic achievement was that they were certain that a connection existed, but were unsure of how to quantify or prove that connection. When asked to imagine why the connection existed, however, each participant who saw a connection related it to increased student engagement related to students desiring (and striving for) ClassDojo points. Teacher A mentioned the connection between student engagement and striving for ClassDojo points by saying the following:

> Um, so in that manner I think that, you know it definitely kinda keeps ‘em working towards being in the positive and in order to be in the positive you have to be engaged in the lessons. So, I think they kinda work hand-in-hand.

Student B2 also made the connection between this increased student engagement and the role that the sounds play in informing students that points have been assigned:

> I guess it does because like I said if like they hea—if Ms. like [Teacher B] has a negative point and stuff, so they’ll hear and then like they’ll talking to their neighbor, so they’ll

> focus on their work, you know, take notes, and then, you know, do their work, the practice and stuff. So when there's a test, they don't fail like 'cause they weren't listening and stuff. So I think it'd help them on their grades sort of.

In a moment of confession, Student B1 also mentioned the effect that ClassDojo has on her own academics, saying, "I basically um—I don't uh talk as much in the classroom when the teacher is talking. I uh answer a question mo—I answer questions more and I mostly do my work quietly." Student C1 followed suit as well, noting the following: "Yeah, it would help. If you hear a bad point then you would get back on task uh and it would help you um get better grades."

Research Question Three

The third Research Question was aimed at determining which technology and/or other resources teachers and students perceived as necessary for the most effective implementation of ClassDojo. Two main themes emerged around this Research Question. First, mobile technology is vastly superior and much to be preferred over stationary technology for the implementation of ClassDojo. Second, the audio and visual components of ClassDojo are very beneficial and require certain technological devices.

Superiority of mobile technology.

One of the most overwhelmingly consistent themes of this study was the fact that participants deemed mobile technology to be superior to stationary technology. While many specifically mentioned this as such, it was also evident in the description of what technology was necessary to implement ClassDojo well. Every single participant mentioned a mobile device (either a tablet or a smartphone) as necessary for the most effective implementation of ClassDojo. While some allowed for the possibility of still using ClassDojo without a mobile

device, many found it absolutely integral to properly implementing the classroom management program.

One of the reasons participants explained as their preference for mobile technology was that it allows for such versatility (especially when a teacher decides to hold class in a non-traditional setting). Student B2 was adamant about the importance of this capability, saying the following:

> Or like, like I said if we're outside, you know, doing an activity, like you know, doing something and then, you know, she doesn't have her computer like with her because it's inside the classroom, she has to go all the way back or.... But I believe she could also use this like we said, like a sticky note and write down names if they're bad or good, and then she could go back when we—once we go inside, but....
>
> I think it would be like mobile because like what if we're not in our classroom, we're somewhere else at a field trip or we're just outside doing an activity outside—an experiment outside. Then like she would have to go back in and, you know, get the Dojo points. So I think it'd be better if she—it was like more mobile, like she had a tablet or something. So, you know, it could use ClassDojo like so she wouldn't have to like, "Oh what should I do about these ClassDojo points?"

Student B4 felt the same way, but expanded the possible alternate locations in which a teacher might want to use ClassDojo to a computer lab:

> I think it'd be harder because let's say she's in a computer lab and we're doing tests and the class is noisy, she would kind of have to go in the class, roll her mobile—roll her unmobile technology all the way to the computer lab, and then use that to actually give us points.

Therefore, according to participants, ClassDojo used with mobile technology is much to be preferred due to its versatility in allowing teachers to stay consistent in their classroom management system even when they go outside for an activity or go to a computer lab.

Another reason that mobile technology is preferred by many participants is for the simple reason that it is easier. In hypothesizing about what technology teachers need to implement ClassDojo well, Student B1 said, “I think they need their phones because all the time the teachers are walking around the classroom and they don’t have the time to use their computer.” Not only do they not have time, they also simply do not want to hassle with going back to their desktop computer, according to Student C3: “I think mobile because then you’ll have to be going back to work that and clicking the name, but then if you just have it mobile, then you just can click on the name wherever you’re at.”

Another reason why mobile technology was deemed by participants to be superior to stationary technology was the opportunity it afforded for the teacher to be able to see the whole classroom much easier. The importance of this fact was demonstrated by Student C2 when talking about the reasons she preferred mobile technology: “Because like the classroom is big and if she walks around with it, she can like see in the back of the class—‘cause to the other side of the class and give points.”

Because participants found mobile technology to be much more valuable than stationary technology, the need for a mobile device to effectively implement ClassDojo was a common theme amongst participants. In fact, every single participant mentioned the need for a mobile device. Some considered a smartphone to be sufficient, but most felt that a tablet of some sort would be the best device to implement ClassDojo well.

Audio and visual components of ClassDojo.

Another theme that arose in relation to the technology necessary to implement ClassDojo was the benefit to be realized when teachers use ClassDojo with the audio and/or visual components ClassDojo offers. Participants were overwhelmingly in favor of using either the sounds that ClassDojo makes when a teacher assigns points or the visual that can be viewed to let all students know how many points they currently have. In fact, multiple participants felt that the ideal implementation of ClassDojo involved both the audio and the visual.

Some participants felt that the ideal implementation of ClassDojo required students to be able to see their points projected within the classroom at all times. As such, each of these participants in favor of the ClassDojo visual mentioned the need for a projector and/or projector screen in the ideal ClassDojo classroom. This was the case for Teacher A who gave multiple reasons for the benefits of constantly having the ClassDojo visual displayed:

> I think that seeing their points in class um it does two things. One I've noticed like, it—it helps that student, especially your students who maybe aren't the ones that are always gonna have their hands up. You know if they're just sitting there quietly, diligently doing their work, they might not get the applause and the recognition otherwise. And so it's a way that it's—and it's not drawing attention to them in an embarrassing way, you know giving them up in the front of the class—I have some kids that if I offer them a piece of licorice they won't come up and get it 'cause they're just so shy and afraid to get in the class. But I can give 'em a quiet little Dojo point and maybe nobody else sees it, maybe a couple people see it, but they at least get the recognition in a more personal and quiet way, which I think they need. And then I also think that, it's funny when I give a point to somebody for a positive thing all of a sudden everyone in the room just kind of sits up

straighter and they realize, “Okay...” You know, and I try to like verbalize like, “Good job, Joseph on being on task. Thank you very much.” And I’ll give him a Dojo point. And that way it kinda makes everyone understand why he got the Dojo point and they kinda try to mimic the behavior. Um, so I think—and I don’t know if that would be as effective if they weren’t actually seeing it. Um, and then there’s—cause there’s kind of like a—I don’t know what the word is but like a, “Hey look at me I’ve got 12 points. I’m awesome.” And they all want to mimic that and they all want to be there. Um, likewise, you know when you take away points, they kind of all feed off of that as well. And so, I just think that visual cue helps. And sometimes it’s not even practical to really stop the class and say, “Hey everyone let’s look at so-and-so because they’re doing such a great job.” But ClassDojo if it’s up there and it’s running even without the sound on, they at least see it and it kind of gives them that visual cue without having to make a verbal statement.

In fact, Teacher A even found reason to have two projectors in her class when imagining the ideal implementation of ClassDojo. One would be dedicated to ClassDojo while another was used for actually displaying the content that was being taught.

Now in an ideal world, you’d actually have two screens. Um, you’d have a screen that just constantly shows the Dojo um application um and always it would be up so that you could throughout the course of the day even if no matter what lesson you’re doing even if you’re using the PowerPoint or the projector for a lesson, you could still have that displayed. Um, and it wouldn’t be obtrusive. I mean you wouldn’t obviously want a huge screen, but just something that um kind of is in the corner, um so it can be seen by the kids.

Teacher A was not alone, however, in the belief that a ClassDojo visual containing every student's point total was involved in the ideal implementation of ClassDojo. Student B2 mentioned this as well, saying, "Um, well yes because then it would show like our points and then we'll see somebody else's points that has a higher point and then we're like, 'Oh my gosh, I gotta beat this person.'" Student B3 echoed this thought, saying, "Well sometimes when people see points, they usually tend to be better in class." In explaining the benefits of a ClassDojo visual, Student C2 said the following: "To see if you're like—if you have like none point—any points. Like if you don't have any um, people might like start working harder to get some, or if you have negative keep on working hard."

Even though many participants found the ClassDojo visual to be very beneficial, there was even more support for the audio portion of ClassDojo. Teachers and students alike found the sounds that ClassDojo makes to be of great benefit. As such, these participants mentioned the need for a speaker system. The speaker system could be elaborate (such as surround sound in the classroom as mentioned by Student C2) or quite simple (such as simply using the speakers built into one's smartphone, as mentioned by Teacher B). Whatever the case, speakers were necessary to most participants as the perceived benefit of the ClassDojo sounds was indispensable.

Student B2 was one of the proponents of the sounds that ClassDojo makes, explaining that when students "hear like a negative sound, then we suddenly, like we suddenly get just quiet and then when we hear a positive sound we—I guess we stay the same, sometimes we get a little bit quieter but, you know." Student B3 also associated the ClassDojo sounds with the quieting down of a class, saying, "Yeah 'cause as soon as the sound goes off, the class is quiet." Student C2 also agreed: "'Cause when somebody gets a bad point and they hear the sound, they're like, 'Oh it might be me.' So they get to work." Because participants found the audio and visual

components of ClassDojo to be so necessary for its effective implementation, they mentioned speakers, a projector, and a computer through which to project an image as necessary technological devices.

Research Question Four

Research Question Four involved determining which, if any, previous technological experiences were necessary to effectively implement ClassDojo. Participants' responses were largely uniform regarding this topic. The only theme that arose was the fact that just about anyone could use ClassDojo because it did not require any special technological skills. In fact, the only actual technological skill or experience that was specifically mentioned by participants was a working knowledge of computers and/or associated technological devices. Student C3 mentioned this need, saying, "They need to know how to use a computer." Student A4 expounded upon just a need for computer skills, saying, "They'd um need to know like how to use mostly like how to use a computer or how to turn on that projector."

Little (if any) technological experience necessary.

Even though a few participants listed certain technological skills (such as the ability to use a computer or other related devices) as necessary to use ClassDojo, by and large they felt that virtually every teacher would have these skills and that ClassDojo would be no more difficult to use than the other technologies teachers were currently expected to use. Student A1 felt that this was the case in saying, "you just have to like put random. It picks someone. You say if it's good or bad and it's not really like oh you have to do this and this and this big process. It's just a little process." All students in Teacher B's class feel that just about anyone could use ClassDojo. When asked in the focus group if anyone could do it, they all replied, "Yeah." Student B2 added, "Yeah even an old school [teacher]. I believe she could do it." Not every student was willing to

go this far, though. A few participants felt that there might be one or two teachers who were too far removed from the technological world to be able to use what they deemed to be an easy system. Student A2 was one such participant, saying the following:

> Um I don't know like I don't think Mr. Smith [pseudonym] could do it. He—He's—He has trouble on just the normal computer putting up the morning announcements like probably the newer, like the younger teachers these days could probably have an easier time than the older teachers who've been teaching a while.

This quote from Student A2 notwithstanding, every participant seemed to indicate that virtually any teacher could implement ClassDojo well without concern for their previous technological experiences and expertise. While there might be a few exceptions to this rule, by and large teachers should have the technological skills to implement ClassDojo according to the participants of this study.

Research Question Five

The fifth and final Research Question dealt with how teachers perceived their use of ClassDojo to influence how they are viewed by administration with regard to using technology in the classroom. The responses from the three teachers involved in this study were almost identical. These responses resulted in two themes:

- Teacher participants agreed that their use of ClassDojo did positively influence how their administrator(s) viewed them, but not necessarily regarding technology integration.
- Teacher participants agreed that their use of ClassDojo was very minimally (or not at all) influenced by whether or not their administrator(s) liked their use of ClassDojo.

ClassDojo's influence on administrators' view.

One of the prevailing themes of the teacher participants' data was the fact that ClassDojo definitely affected the view that their administrator had regarding their teaching. The reason for this view being affected, however, was different for each participant. Furthermore, they did not feel that their administrator's view was affected by the mere use of technology. Teacher A attributed any change in her administrator's view to the fact that she was being flexible and trying new things:

> And we also tend to be more willing to try things and to be flexible, and… For that manner I think that that's something that is appreciated by our administrators, because I think our administrators come, and they have all these different ideas thrown at them and different approaches and I think with technology, it's an—it's a way to get our kids engaged that's not this traditional, you know, behavior reflections where they're in the office.

Teacher A also added that a lot of the benefit of ClassDojo regarding her administrator's view of her has to do with how it contributes to a better climate in her classroom and on the campus, in general:

> Um, and I really feel like it goes with just the whole climate on this campus…of its non-threatening approach to managing behavior. You're not screaming at kids, you're not forcing compliance. I mean you're really building a happy community and it kind of excites kids to be a part of it. And I think for that manner I think it's something that goes with the climate on this ca—this campus. And whenever you do things that go with the climate of the campus, I think that makes your administrators happy.

Teacher C has not been implementing ClassDojo since the beginning of the year. Because of this, she could not even be sure that her administrators knew she was using ClassDojo. Nevertheless, when asked if she thought her administrator(s) would like her use of ClassDojo, she hypothesized that they would, but that this benefit would be limited to the fact that the program supported a site focus—PBIS. Any benefit that administrators perceived would be due to the fact that the program helps PBIS, not that it is a good use of technology in the classroom. Teacher C explained this belief that all benefit of ClassDojo is due to its support of their site focus when she said the following:

> I think that it would be depending upon what my usage is. If I was using it in a positive way, I think that they would in support of that because it does support our PBIS um initiative on campus, and that's what we're supposed to be focusing on is accentuating the positive things that our students are doing versus harping on them about all the negatives….But I think it just how it ties in with PBIS would be their biggest influence.

While Teacher C also mentioned that administrators might enjoy how much ClassDojo causes her to walk around her room, most of the benefit that can be realized from ClassDojo is tied to the fact that it is a way for teachers to be positive about students' behavior.

Teacher B explained similar views as compared to the other teacher participants. Like Teachers A and C, she felt that her administrator(s) view of her might be positively influenced by her use of ClassDojo. Her reason for feeling this way, however, was different from the other two teachers. She felt that any benefit in how her administrator(s) viewed her would be achieved simply by the fact that she was using any tool that improved her classroom management. Admitting that she has struggled with classroom management in the past, Teacher B realizes that any program that can improve her classroom management will positively influence her

administrators' view of her. "I think that they like it. Um when I was observed, they did mention it in my observations that they liked that I was using um that as a behavior management tool." When asked specifically whether or not their improved perception of her teaching had anything to do with integrating technology, she said, "No. I don't remember um I don't remember them talking about being excited that I used the technology part. I think that it was more for the behaviors...that it's a positive behavior."

So, while each teacher feels that their administrators have a higher view of them due to the implementation of ClassDojo, none of them see that as having anything to do with the fact that they are incorporating technology, *per se*. In fact, each teacher believes the benefit of a better view in their administrators' eyes to be due to a different reason than the other teacher participants.

Motivation for teachers using ClassDojo.

Even though each teacher participant feels ClassDojo positively influences their administrators' view of them, and even though each teacher participant has different reasons that they feel their administrator appreciates their use of ClassDojo, none of them use ClassDojo for this reason. Each of the three teacher participants claimed that they started using ClassDojo and continue to use it because of benefits other than an improved perception in their administrators' eyes. When asked if an administrator's improved perception of her contributed to why she continued to use ClassDojo, Teacher A said, "No. But, I will say if…a formal observation, I do make a point that they see that I'm using it. But do I use it because of that? No." Teacher C went even further, saying, "I don't do anything in my classroom really because my administrators like it." She continued:

> Um, I mean certainly as a new teacher it doesn't, you know, hurt me to have my administrator like something that I'm doing, but my primary focus is not, "Are they gonna enjoy this?" It's how—is it going to help me uh do something a little better in my classroom, or am I gonna be able to manage something a little easier or, you know…

While perhaps not as adamant as Teacher C, Teacher B agreed, saying, "I used it before I was observed, and I continued to use it not only because they were happy with it, but because it works for me—not because they wanted me to."

All in all, while teacher participants view their use of ClassDojo to be beneficial in how their administrators view them, this benefit is not due to the mere use of technology, in general. Rather, each teacher feels that their administrator appreciates a different aspect of their use of ClassDojo. In addition, no teacher participant is motivated solely by the fact that their administrator thinks more highly of them for their use of ClassDojo. Rather, they use it because it has some pragmatic value to them in their individual classrooms.

Summary

This chapter recorded the data results from 15 participants—three teachers and 12 students. Each participant engaged in an individual, long interview. Furthermore, three focus groups were conducted comprised of four student participants from each teacher participant's classroom. The data from these 15 interviews and three focus groups were transcribed verbatim. Those transcripts underwent the phenomenological reduction process as previously described through which nine themes emerged revolving around the five research questions (Moustakas, 1994).

With regard to Research Question One, three themes emerged. The first theme revealed the fact that each student participant is highly motivated to earn as many positive points as they

can in ClassDojo. While students are not all motivated by the same reason, the fact remains that students are highly motivated to earn points in ClassDojo. The second theme that emerged with regard to Research Question One was that there are multiple advantages to ClassDojo as a classroom management tool. Some appreciate the ability for a teacher to move about the classroom, while others appreciate the audio/visual component of ClassDojo, and still others prefer the immediacy of the response to behavior that is afforded with ClassDojo. No matter the reason, each participant felt that ClassDojo was an effective classroom management system over and above others. Finally, the third theme that emerged around Research Question One is the fact that there are contexts in which ClassDojo is more effective than others. Some felt that individual work was an ideal scenario for ClassDojo, while others felt that it worked best during group work, but all participants felt that ClassDojo was ideal at one particular setting in a classroom.

Regarding Research Question Two, which dealt with whether or not ClassDojo affects student achievement, one theme emerged. Participants felt that ClassDojo did have an effect on academic achievement and grades, though they could not quantify it. When tasked with thinking about why this connection exists, participants responded that they felt that the desire to obtain ClassDojo points resulted in students paying much more attention than they otherwise would. As such, students were focused on the content at hand. Participants felt that being more attentive in class would lead to better grades and higher academic achievement, though they admitted that they did not have any hard data to support this belief.

Research Question Three dealt with what technology participants felt was necessary to implement ClassDojo well. Two themes emerged revolving around this research question. First, participants were overwhelmingly in support of mobile technology over and above stationary technology. Every participant felt that mobile technology would improve the implementation of

ClassDojo. Some attributed this to the simple fact that it was easier when using mobile technology. Others felt that the ability to take one's classroom management strategy to a non-traditional classroom (such as outside or in a computer lab) was a vote in favor of mobile technology. The second theme that emerged around this research question was the fact that the audio and visual components of ClassDojo were very effective. Participants agreed that either the sounds that ClassDojo makes, the image that it produces, or both were important for the immediate feedback that is the hallmark of ClassDojo.

Regarding Research Question Four, which dealt with technological experience(s) necessary for teachers to have to implement ClassDojo well, participants felt that just about anyone should be able to implement ClassDojo without any special technological experience(s) in their past. While a working knowledge of computers and related technological devices was specifically mentioned, participants felt that most, if not all, teachers have the technological skills necessary to implement ClassDojo well.

The fifth and final research question concerned whether teacher participants perceived their administrator as having a higher view of them because of their use of ClassDojo. Two themes emerged related to this question. First, each teacher participant felt that there was, indeed, a positive influence that ClassDojo had on their administrators' view of them. They each had their own reason, however, for this influence. None of the teacher participants felt that this benefit came as a result of simply using more technology, though. The second theme related to this research question was that administrators' improved views of the teacher participants due to their use of ClassDojo had nothing to do with why the teacher participants started or continue to use ClassDojo. Each teacher participant uses ClassDojo simply because it is beneficial in their

classroom for one reason or another, not because it makes them look any certain way in front of their administrator.

The final step in the data analysis process was to account for the validity of the study through an external review. I had a fellow qualitative doctoral student investigate the Individual Textural and Structural Descriptions in order to ensure that they were accurate representations of the data and that I had been true to the process of phenomenological reduction.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

A growing theme amongst teachers and administrators is that classrooms of today are more and more difficult places in which to teach. The rise in constant disruptions from students makes this a reality (Edwards & Mullis, 2003; Kariuki, 2009; Pass, 2007; Rahman *et al.*, 2010). When this is coupled with the fact that the interventions available to teachers of today (such as in-school suspensions and expulsions) are largely ineffective (Allman & Slate, 2012), the situation seems quite bleak. Not only are these interventions less effective, there are simply fewer interventions from which teachers can choose as compared to teachers 50 years ago (Allman & Slate, 2012). This leads to a reality in which administrators are allowing deviant behaviors of that would have been met with swift discipline years ago to now go unpunished (Allman & Slate, 2012).

While the situation just described seems fairly bleak already, this is not where the problem ends. With more being required of teachers than ever and teachers being pulled in more directions than ever, being required to implement more and more programs and interventions, today's teachers are not able to spend as much time focusing on classroom management systems and strategies (Crotwell, 2011). The use of technology is one of the ways in which today's teachers are being drawn that their counterparts of a few decades ago did not have to even think about (DeWert, 1999; McInnis, 2002). The result of the inclusion of technology proficiency as a requirement of teachers is exacerbated by the fact that teachers simply have less and less time to dedicate to other things (such as classroom management) (Crotwell, 2011). In light of all this, a need exists for a solution that can diminish teachers' workload. A system that can both address administrators' desire for more technology in the classroom as well as improve teachers'

classroom management would seem to be an ideal solution to some of today's teachers' problems.

This study was aimed at examining one of those potential solutions. Touted as an effective classroom management system, ClassDojo is a web-based system that has the potential to address both administrators' concern for technology in the classroom and teachers' need for robust classroom management strategies and systems. With that in mind, this transcendental phenomenological study was aimed at describing the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool for three middle school classrooms in the Cardinal Unified School District (pseudonym). Five research questions guided this study. They were as follows:

Research Question One: How do teachers and students perceive the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool?

Research Question Two: How do teachers and students perceive the implementation of ClassDojo to influence student achievement?

Research Question Three: What technology and/or other resources do teachers and students perceive as necessary for the most effective implementation of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool?

Research Question Four: What previous technological experience(s) do teachers perceive as necessary to effectively implement ClassDojo?

Research Question Five: How do teachers perceive their use of ClassDojo to influence how they are viewed by administration with regard to using technology in the classroom?

In order to answer these five research questions, I followed Moustakas' (1994) design for transcendental phenomenological research. In doing so, I chose 15 participants—three teachers

and 12 of their students. I observed their three classrooms, interviewed each of the 15 participants, and conducted three focus groups with the 12 student participants. I analyzed the data through the process of phenomenological reduction as laid forth by Moustakas (1994). The study was grounded in the theoretical framework of the research of both B. F. Skinner (1953) and Albert Bandura (1986).

This chapter contains a summary of the findings of this transcendental phenomenological study. The findings are reported in terms of the themes that emerged from the data and in relation to the research questions. Subsequently, there is a revisiting of the theoretical framework in order to detail how this study adds to the field of literature already extant. There is also a description of the delimitations and limitations of this study as well as its implications for subsequent research. Finally, there is a recommendation for future research to be conducted that relates to this study as well as a summary of the study.

Summary of Findings

In Chapter Four, the results of this study were detailed. In summary, nine themes were uncovered regarding the perceptions of the three teachers and 12 students in this study with respect to ClassDojo as a classroom management tool. These themes were as follows: (a) motivation for earning points, (b) advantages of ClassDojo, (c) most effective contexts, (d) ClassDojo's increased engagement means better academic achievement, (e) superiority of mobile technology, (f) audio and visual components of ClassDojo, (g) little (if any) technological experience necessary, (h) ClassDojo's influence on administrators' view, and (i) motivation for teachers using ClassDojo.

The themes of (a) motivation for earning points, (b) advantages of ClassDojo, and (c) most effective contexts revolved around Research Question One and described how teachers and

students perceive the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool. The theme of "ClassDojo's increased engagement means better academic achievement" emerged to describe the participants' view of how they perceive the implementation of ClassDojo to influence student achievement, addressing Research Question Two. Regarding Research Question Three and the technology and/or other resources teachers and students perceived as necessary for the most effective implementation of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool, two themes emerged. These two themes—superiority of mobile technology and audio and visual components of ClassDojo—explained participants' view(s) of the technology necessary to implement ClassDojo well. "Little (if any) technological experience necessary" was the theme that described participants' view(s) of the previous technological experience(s) necessary to effectively implement ClassDojo, addressing Research Question Four. Two themes—ClassDojo's influence on administrators' view and motivation for teachers using ClassDojo—described the teacher participants' view(s) of how their use of ClassDojo influences how they are viewed by administration with regard to using technology in the classroom.

Discussion

While one cannot possibly measure the influence of all the sources that have affected him and his view on life, there are at least two theories that I know have influenced my approach to this study. First, B. F. Skinner (1953) put forth the notion of behaviorism (or operant conditioning), distinguishing himself from the classical conditioning proponents that preceded him. Second, Albert Bandura (1986) built on the research of the Social Learning Theorists of his day by putting forth the Social Cognitive Theory. Both of these theories influenced my research. Furthermore, the participants in this study communicated the influence of both of these theories (whether or not by name) and how they played into the implementation of ClassDojo.

Behaviorism (or Operant Conditioning)

The first theory related to this study was B. F. Skinner's behaviorism (or operant conditioning) (1953). Differentiating himself from classical conditioning and its proponents (such as Pavlov), Skinner argued that humans act out of a reaction not to a stimulus, but to a reinforcement (Miller, 2011; Skinner, 1938). He further argued the order of events. Rather than humans reacting to a stimulus as classical conditioning proponents would argue, Skinner purported that, at least initially, humans act somewhat randomly. They then notice the results of their acting that way and perceive the result as either a positive or negative reinforcement, which then affects how they act in the future (Skinner, 1938).

The participants in this study mentioned this connection between a stimulus (mainly the sounds that ClassDojo makes) and behavior change. In fact, Teacher B even recognized ClassDojo as a technology that allows for operant conditioning. She mentioned this in distinguishing between her implementation of ClassDojo from last year to this year saying, "and they are more conditioned to hearing the chime when they hear the negative sound, it does bring it to their attention more…." To be sure, while each participant was not quite as overt about actually naming the system with the term, "conditioning," there was a consensus amongst participants that the sounds affected how students acted in the class.

Social Cognitive Theory

The second theory that related to this study was the Social Cognitive Theory put forth by Albert Bandura (1986). Bandura's contemporaries, Social Learning Theorists, argued against Locke's notion that children are *tabula rasa*—blank slates—on which to write (Miller, 2011). Rather, they believed that children learned to act based on their observation of others. While Social Learning Theorists leaned more toward a mindless repetition of what everyone else is

doing, Bandura (1986) expounded upon this belief by bringing cognition to the forefront (Miller, 2011). He argued that humans observe what others do and subsequently think about whether or not that is something they want to mimic. After this thought process, they then decide to act the same way they have observed or to act a different way altogether.

The participants in this study demonstrated the validity of the Social Cognitive Theory in their responses to the interview and focus group questions. Some students mentioned that when another student in the class would receive a positive point, they would mimic their behavior in an attempt to earn the reward associated with positive points. If this were where students' explanation ended, one could argue that it were support for the Social Learning Theory. Participants covertly mentioned the cognition aspect as well, though. Many students mentioned the fact that they would notice that another student received a negative point and would change their behavior so as to be sure that the same thing did not happen to them. As such, these students were recognizing that any behavior similar to their peer would earn them a negative point. Therefore, rather than simply mimicking their classmates, students were watching what their peers did and thinking about whether or not it was a behavior worth mimicking. In the case of negative points, they determined that it was not something they wanted to mimic and would do the exact opposite.

Related Literature

As explained in Chapter Two, the related literature for this study deals with two different fields. First and most obvious is the field of Education as this study took place in a classroom setting. More specifically, this study dealt with a specific component of the Education field—classroom management. The second was the field of Technology as ClassDojo is ultimately a technology that is used in many classrooms around the country. The following is a restatement of

the related literature of those two fields in an effort to detail how this study intersects and adds to them both.

Classroom management.

Chapter Two outlined the history of classroom management as it relates to American education. The Colonial Period was characterized by utter teacher autonomy as teachers were allowed to delve out discipline to any one of their students however they saw fit. The recourse of the parents, on the other hand, was the ability to choose a different teacher for their child if they did not agree with the teachers' classroom management style. With the start of compulsory education in America, however, parents lost this ability to choose their children's teacher. In accordance with this shift, teachers started to tend away from the corporal punishment that was such a hallmark of schools in the previous centuries. The 20th century, however, provided the most monumental shift regarding classroom management. Whereas teachers once had full autonomy over their classrooms as afforded by *in loco parentis*, the 20th century brought about a series of court cases that chipped away at the robustness of the doctrine of *in loco parentis*. With *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969), *Goss v. Lopez* (1975), *Ingraham v. Wright* (1977), and *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* (1985), students were afforded in the court's rulings more and more rights. As such, whereas teachers' once had full rights to do as they pleased in the classroom regarding classroom management, after this series of court cases, they had to begin worrying about whether their classroom management systems infringed upon students' rights. As such, every right afforded students meant a resultant right that was taken away from teachers.

These teachers, stripped of their autonomy in the classroom, often seek any classroom management system that will both comply with law and still maintain a classroom. Whereas a few centuries ago, teachers were able to simply control their classrooms with a ruler and a dunce

hat, now teachers often find themselves scrambling for a classroom management system that will work despite not having full autonomy over how they handle discipline. While classroom management used to be focused on keeping order helping students learn, now it is more focused on trying to create an environment in which learning is even possible (Conte, 1994). ClassDojo is a technology that touts itself as a classroom management tool. It is a system that can potentially make that learning environment a reality. The findings of this study indicate that in three general education, middle school classrooms, ClassDojo's claims are true. While not using the methods of Colonial classroom management such as a ruler and a dunce hat, but complying with the rulings of the Supreme Court, ClassDojo has shown itself to be an effective classroom management tool. This belief was shared by both the student and teacher participants in this study.

Any current review of the literature concerning classroom management would be incomplete without a mention of PBIS. This school-wide system for classroom management, which was discussed in Chapter Two, is taking the country by storm as more and more schools and districts are making it one of their initiatives. In fact, it is in over 18,000 schools nationwide. As the name indicates, the goal of the system is to provide feedback to students regarding their positive behavior. While teachers have historically been experienced in criticizing students for their bad behavior, the wave of the future (indeed, the present) is to not focus so much on the negative behaviors that students exhibit, but to reward them for the positive behaviors they display. As is evident in the three teachers' classrooms of this study, ClassDojo is a practical classroom management system that not only improves the behaviors of students in a teachers' classroom, but also helps support teachers in their implementation of PBIS. ClassDojo offers that opportunity (and reminder) that some teachers need in order to award students' good behaviors.

Nowhere is this more evident than with Teacher C's motivation for using ClassDojo. "…I started using it with the hope that it would help me to improve with my PBIS." Her site and district have PBIS implementation as one of their main foci. As a conscientious teacher, she wanted to do her part to live up to the expectations placed on her and thought ClassDojo might be a good way to help keep her "positive feedback at the 4-to-1 ratio [of positive comments to negative ones] which is what our ideal is…." In the end, her trying ClassDojo was not fruitless. On the contrary, "I feel like this was a tool to help me achieve that [the 4-to-1 ratio] a little bit better and have that visual reminder, 'Oh I can give positive feedback for helping others.'"

Technology.

The second component on which this study hinged relates to the Technology field. Since ClassDojo is a technology that is often used in classrooms, the related literature on technology was important as well. One of the salient points from that research is the fact that it is so important for teachers to feel comfortable with the technology that they use in the classroom. The literature mentioned that if teachers are not comfortable with the technology they are using, it will not be effective (Hughes, 2005; Pierson, 2001; Sugar & Slagter van Tryon, 2014; Thielst, 2007). While some technologies likely require official professional development to take place beforehand, the participants in this study indicated that ClassDojo was very easy for virtually any teacher to implement in a classroom. This was the resounding opinion of teachers and students alike. As such, teachers who try out ClassDojo can expect to be comfortable with it very quickly.

The related literature on technology integration also dealt with the benefits and drawbacks to having technology in the classroom. One of the chief reasons among the benefits was the fact that technology is often associated with a dynamic visual image. This tends to keep students more engaged (Aviles & Eastman, 2012). As such, students often are able to learn more

because the technology simply draws them in and keeps their attention longer than a teacher lecturing at the front of the classroom would. This benefit is realized in ClassDojo as many of the participants mentioned that ClassDojo likely positively affects the academic achievement of students in the classroom due to their increased engagement.

While there are benefits to be realized by the incorporation of technology into K-12 classrooms, one cannot ignore the literature that discusses the drawbacks to technology. Chief among the drawbacks to technology integration is the cost often associated with doing so. The wonderful thing about ClassDojo, however, is that it is free to use. This might be misleading, however, in that often teachers tend to use ClassDojo with a projector, computer, sound system, and/or mobile device. These hardware devices are obviously costly. When allowed to let their imaginations run wild as to what technology would provide for the best implementation of ClassDojo, participants came up with some interesting (yet costly) ideas. If money were not an issue, then a great deal of technology in classrooms would absolutely aid in the implementation of ClassDojo. Nevertheless, in a real world where money is always an issue, one can rest in the participants' responses to what technology is absolutely necessary to implement ClassDojo. The Least Common Denominator of the responses to this question was the need for a mobile device (which many teachers already own) and some sort of speaker system. A few participants are content with the speakers provided on most smartphones. While this is not the ideal situation for implementing ClassDojo, it is certainly a reasonable alternative for schools or districts that do not have the room in their technology budget to supply all classrooms with LCD projectors, SMART boards, speaker systems, etc.

Implications

Given the findings previously explained, there are major implications for a few different fields. The first implication is for those teachers who are currently using ClassDojo in general education, middle school classrooms. The findings of this study indicate that ClassDojo can be highly motivating for students in these types of classrooms. One of the more salient points of the findings is that some form of communication between ClassDojo and students is necessary in order to effectively implement ClassDojo. All of the participants in this study mentioned the importance of either the audio, the visual, or both capabilities of ClassDojo. As such, any teacher who is currently implementing ClassDojo without at least using one of these features is likely not getting the most out of the program that they can. Incorporating the use of the audio and/or video component(s) of ClassDojo would likely be beneficial.

Second, there is an obvious implication for general education, middle school teachers who are not currently using ClassDojo. The results of this study indicate that 15 participants perceive ClassDojo as an effective classroom management tool. While many classroom management tools can easily earn an endorsement from teachers and others can easily earn an endorsement from students, a classroom management tool that earns an endorsement from both teachers and students alike is unique. Furthermore, the fact that each of the 15 participants in this study unanimously endorsed ClassDojo and that some students even mentioned that they would suggest any teacher struggling with classroom management ought to use it, speaks volumes to the effectiveness of this classroom management tool in general education classrooms at the middle school level. As such, it would behoove teachers of general education, middle school classrooms to try this relatively new technology. This is even more so the case for those teachers who feel like Teacher B in her explanation of her first trying out ClassDojo: “Last year was a lot

rougher with my students behaviors and so I was looking for any and every way to try to um motivate them, and to try to do things." Any general education, middle school teacher who, like Teacher B, feels that the behaviors in their classroom are out of control and feel lost as to how to resolve the problem, might find ClassDojo to be the classroom management tool for which they have been waiting.

Another implication of this study has to do with PBIS. This often school-wide classroom management system has been and is sweeping across the nation. One of its main tenets involves rewarding students for their positive behavior. As has been demonstrated by this study's teacher participants, ClassDojo is an effective way for teachers to provide students accolades for their positive behavior. Furthermore, the presence of ClassDojo in the classroom can serve as a reminder to the teacher to be cognizant of their need to provide students with that positive feedback.

A fourth and less obvious implication of this study is the implication for the field of technology development. In the final analysis, ClassDojo is not an overly complicated program. And yet, this relatively simple technology that has not even been around for five years is being used by 35 million teachers, parents, and students today and is in over 50% of U.S. schools (ClassDojo, 2015)! If a simple technology like ClassDojo can spread so rapidly to over half of the schools in America and can be unanimously supported by the 15 participants in this study, surely there are other technologies that can be developed intentionally for the U.S. classroom to support teachers in their daily task(s). As demonstrated by the teacher participants in this study, much of what makes ClassDojo so desirable is the fact that it supports teachers in efforts in which they are already involved (like classroom management) and allows them to address these issues in a more time-efficient manner. With all the diverse responsibilities placed on teachers of

today, surely other technologies can be devised that will support teachers in a similar way. The challenge exists, therefore, for technology developers to continue working on other solutions for common classroom problems.

Limitations

As previously mentioned, this research had two main delimitations. These delimitations were that potential participants were limited to middle school teachers and students in the general education setting. This was an intentional decision based on a few things. First, classroom management strategies vary depending on the developmental level of the students in the classroom (Martin & Baldwin, 1996). Therefore, a delimitation to the middle school age group allowed for the data of the research to be consistent, which may not have been the case without such a delimitation. I also intentionally delimited the study to general education classrooms for a similar reason. Oliver and Reschly (2010) allude to the notion that special education teachers typically handle classroom management much differently than those in general education classrooms. Also, there are limitations placed on special education teachers by governmental agencies concerning what disciplinary actions are available to them (Michigan State Department of Education, 2000b). As such, I intentionally delimited the study to general education classrooms for sake of consistency in the data.

There are also a couple limitations for this study. At least one is related to the delimitations. While it was necessary to delimit the study as previously described, doing so also became a limitation of the study. While the data from the participants in this study was very consistent, it came from three teachers and 12 students at two middle schools. As such, any transferability to a setting other than general education, middle school classrooms would probably be suspect. Furthermore, while there is definitely a disparity between the populations of

students at the two middle schools represented in this study, and teachers within the Cardinal Unified School District (pseudonym) perceive these two schools to represent the most affluent and least affluent families in the community, the participants do not actually represent the extremes of the potential populations of schools across the country.

Another limitation of the study is the fact that it was heavily represented by females. All three teacher participants were females. While it may have been preferable to have at least one male teacher participant, this reality was simply not possible because of the number of interested participants and the delimitation previously described. Furthermore, 9 out of 12 students were females. Again, this situation was unavoidable due to the number of willing participants (and parents). Nevertheless, this reality limits the transferability of the findings to all potential classrooms in America.

There is one more limitation for the study based on the age of the participants. While most participants expressed the belief that ClassDojo was easy to use for just about any potential teacher. Nevertheless, a few participants expressed one or two exceptions to that rule. Specifically, Student A2 mentioned the following:

> Um I don't know like I don't think Mr. Smith [pseudonym] could do it. He—He's—He has trouble on just the normal computer putting up the morning announcements like probably the newer, like the younger teachers these days could probably have an easier time than the older teachers who've been teaching a while.

In the spirit of Student A2's comment, it should be noted that the three teacher participants in this study were all in their mid-thirties. Any generalizability to significantly older teachers might not be tenable.

Recommendations for Future Research

As previously described, there is a great deal of research regarding classroom management as this is a huge topic in Education. The paucity of research regarding new technologies that are designed around classroom management, however, cries out for future research. As such, an exhaustive list of potential future research in this area is not practical. Nevertheless, there are some obvious connections between this research and the need for further research.

One of the more obvious areas that requires further research is related to the delimitations of this study. Since this study was intentionally delimited to general education, middle school classrooms, there is an obvious need for similar research in both the elementary and high school settings. Furthermore, similar studies in the field of special education are in order. Future researchers might also consider the importance of administrators' perspectives of ClassDojo. While this study suggested the possibility that administrators might prefer ClassDojo for one reason or another, an intentional investigation into administrators' perspectives regarding ClassDojo would be beneficial.

While I have previously mentioned the fact that ClassDojo can be found in 1 out of 2 schools in the United States (ClassDojo, 2015), the fact remains that its influence extends beyond the borders of America. In fact, it was started by two United Kingdom educators (ClassDojo, 2014). Research into ClassDojo's perceived effectiveness in countries other than the United States and compared to the results from the United States would greatly further the body of literature.

Another related topic that would suggest further research is the many other technologies that have emerged on the Educational horizon in the last decade. Some of these have been

previously mentioned in this study—Too Noisy, Smart Seat, and Socrative—to mention a few. While these technologies are not all aimed precisely at classroom management, an investigation of their effectiveness in classrooms is in order.

A final recommendation for future research relates to the critique of behaviorism as offered by Alfie Kohn and others. Kohn argues that behaviorism's "assumptions are misleading and the practices it generates are both intrinsically objectionable and counterproductive" (1999, p. 4). In his book, Kohn (1999) makes a case against the notion of rewarding in general, arguing that the notion of rewarding for good behavior can be counterproductive in that it does not actually produce caring citizens, but simply rule-followers. As such, and since ClassDojo is so inextricably linked with rewards for behavior, whether or not ClassDojo can actually wean students off the need for rewards to the point that they simply desire to be good because it is the right thing to do would add a great deal to this body of research.

Summary

With the theories of B. F. Skinner (1953) and Albert Bandura (1986) as a theoretical framework, this transcendental phenomenological study was aimed at describing the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool for three middle school classrooms in the Cardinal Unified School District (pseudonym). Five research questions outlined the structure of this study:

Research Question One: How do teachers and students perceive the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool?

Research Question Two: How do teachers and students perceive the implementation of ClassDojo to influence student achievement?

Research Question Three: What technology and/or other resources do teachers and students perceive as necessary for the most effective implementation of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool?

Research Question Four: What previous technological experience(s) do teachers perceive as necessary to effectively implement ClassDojo?

Research Question Five: How do teachers perceive their use of ClassDojo to influence how they are viewed by administration with regard to using technology in the classroom?

With these five research questions, I chose three teacher participants and 12 student participants. With these 15 participants, I conducted classroom observations, individual interviews and focus groups to answer the preceding questions. All these procedures were conducted and data was analyzed using Moustakas' (1994) process for phenomenological reduction.

Using this process, nine themes emerged from the data: (1) motivation for earning points, (2) advantages of ClassDojo, (3) most effective contexts, (4) ClassDojo's increased engagement means better academic achievement, (5) superiority of mobile technology, (6) audio and visual components of ClassDojo, (7) little (if any) technological experience necessary, (8) ClassDojo's influence on administrators' view, and (9) motivation for teachers using ClassDojo. These themes revolved around the five research questions and helped to elucidate the perceptions of the 15 participants regarding ClassDojo and its implementation as a classroom management tool.

In the end, each and every participant perceived ClassDojo as an effective classroom management tool. They felt this way for a number of reasons, not the least of which relate to the theoretical framework for the study. Like B. F. Skinner (1953), participants felt that one of the main reasons ClassDojo was effective is due to its operant conditioning element. Participants consistently explained that one of the most valuable features of ClassDojo is its audio

capabilities. The sounds that ClassDojo makes causes students to behave a certain way. Participants consistently iterated the fact that the sounds associated with positive points cause students to act in such a way so as to earn positive points. Likewise, the sound associated with negative points causes students to act in such a way as to avoid negative points.

Participants also consistently communicated the notion that students are influenced by the results associated with their behaviors. In line with Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, when a student receives a positive point, the other students in the classroom recognize what that student did to earn the positive point. They then think about what they have to do to replicate that behavior in order to receive the same reward/benefit. This thinking process results in them mimicking the behavior of the student who received the positive point. On the other hand, when a student receives a negative point, students in the class think about what behavior earned that student a negative point and what they need to do differently than that student in order to avoid getting a negative point themselves. This thinking process results in them not mimicking the behavior of the student who received the negative point.

One of the driving factors of this research was the fact that teachers are being given more and more responsibilities related to their teaching assignments. One such example is the need to incorporate technology into the classroom. With this reality, teachers have less and less time to focus on classroom management. Part of the motivation for conducting this study was to investigate whether or not something added to a teachers' classroom (in this case, a technology) could actually lighten teachers' loads. The reality is that participants in this study overwhelmingly agreed that this was the case. While adding something to a teacher's classroom seems like it would cause more stress for a teacher, the reality is that the participants

communicated that the ease of using ClassDojo actually freed up time for teachers to focus on their other obligations.

Ultimately, though, the purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to describe the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool for three middle school classrooms at Cardinal Unified School District (pseudonym). All of the preceding content has been aimed at that purpose. In the end, the participants in this study all deemed ClassDojo to be an effective classroom management tool to the point that many of them said they would recommend it to other teachers. Even middle school students felt so strongly in favor of ClassDojo, that they were willing to suggest it to their teachers who struggled with managing a classroom. On the face of it, this seems paradoxical. There is often a perceived dichotomy between teachers and students regarding classroom management—teachers want a managed classroom and students do not. The fact that students enjoy ClassDojo so much as to suggest it to teachers that do not manage their classrooms well speaks volumes to how these participants view the effectiveness of ClassDojo as a classroom management tool.

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APPENDIX A

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

February 3, 2015

Michael S. Burger
IRB Approval 2065.020315: The Perception of the Effectiveness of Classdojo in Middle School Classrooms: A Transcendental Phenomenological Study

Dear Michael,

We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year from the date provided above with your protocol number. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB, and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

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UNIVERSITY.

Liberty University | Training Champions for Christ since 1971

1971 UNIVERSITY BLVD. LYNCHBURG, VA. 24515 IRB@LIBERTY.EDU FAX (434) 522-0506 WWW.LIBERTY.EDU

APPENDIX B

Time	Description	Reflection

APPENDIX C

Interview Outline	Comments/Reflection
Interview Protocol Before the interview, I will: • Ensure the participant has returned a signed informed consent document to me. • Remind the participant that the interview will be audio recorded. • Remind the participant that their identity will remain anonymous. • Remind them that they can withdraw from participation in the study at any time. • Ask that the participant feel free to communicate openly and elaborate on their answers. • Remind them that I am interested in what they *think* and that there is not necessarily a "right" answer. • Preview the format of the interview (especially regarding my potential need to probe answers deeper and ask follow-up questions).	

Introduction Interviewer Script: *The first series of questions are aimed at trying to determine how you found out about ClassDojo and came to start using it as well as some preliminary questions.* 1. If someone asked you what ClassDojo is, what would you tell them? 2. How did you hear about ClassDojo? 3. How long have you been using ClassDojo? 4. What made you first want to try using it? 5. What behaviors do your students receive ClassDojo points for? • Can a student receive positive and/or negative points? 6. Do students in your classroom receive intrinsic reward from ClassDojo or do you tie something extrinsic to it as well? 7. What technology do you currently use in the implementation of ClassDojo?	

Research Question 1 Interviewer Script: *The next series of questions deal with ClassDojo as a classroom management tool.* 8. Do you believe ClassDojo helps a teacher manage a classroom? • Why do you think so? • Do you see this as the primary function of ClassDojo or a secondary one? 9. Do you think ClassDojo could be most effectively used as a classroom management tool if students were not able to see their points during class? Why? • What if they were not able to hear the sounds that it makes? 10. Do you think that the most effective use of ClassDojo would include students being able to see their points *and* hear the sounds that ClassDojo makes? • Why do you think this? 11. Does ClassDojo ever experience technical difficulties to the point that it almost seems useless to try to use it as compared to another classroom management technique or program?	

12. Are there contexts (such as group work, lecture, individual seat work) in which using ClassDojo as a classroom management tool makes more or less sense than others? • Are there times/contexts in which you feel ClassDojo is not useful at all?	
Research Question 2 Interviewer Script: *The next series of questions deal with ClassDojo as it relates to student achievement.* 13. How, if at all, do you think that the giving of positive ClassDojo points affects student engagement? • How, if at all, does giving negative points affect student engagement? 14. How, if at all, do you think ClassDojo affects student achievement? 15. If you believe ClassDojo helps students achieve higher, is it a significantly higher achievement? 16. If you believe ClassDojo helps students achieve higher, why do you think so?	

Research Questions 3 and 4 Interviewer Script: *The following series of questions deal with what technology you deem as necessary for the ideal implementation of ClassDojo. Please keep in mind that these questions deal with an ideal world in which you could choose any and all technology that would help you implement ClassDojo well, without concern for cost.* 17. What technology do you think teachers need in order to use ClassDojo most effectively? • If teachers do not have this technology, can they still use ClassDojo well? 18. What previous technological experience does one need to use ClassDojo? 19. Can ClassDojo be as easily utilized with stationary technology (such as a desktop computer) as it can with mobile technology (such as a smartphone or tablet)? • Can it be used as *effectively* with stationary technology as it can with mobile technology?	

20. What, if any, necessary preparation needs to be done before class (such as turning on a computer or signing into an app, etc.) in order to most effectively use ClassDojo? • How much time does that take?	
Research Question 5 Interviewer Script: *Some teachers think that administrators want to see more technology in the classroom. The next series of questions have to do with how you view ClassDojo as impacting the way your administrators view you. In order to answer these questions, you do not need to be able to read your administrators' minds. Feel free to simply answer concerning what you think is their view of you.* 21. How, if at all, do you think using ClassDojo influences how your administrators see you? 22. Does this belief have anything to do with why you started to use ClassDojo? 23. Does this belief have anything to do with why you continue to use ClassDojo?	

Conclusion Interviewer Script: *The final series of questions has to do with any other information that you can give that I have not learned from you already.* 24. Have you ever mentioned ClassDojo to a fellow teacher? • If so, what was your advice to them? • If you have not mentioned it to another teacher, but you did today, what would you tell them? What would be your selling point to that teacher? 25. Do you ever forget to use ClassDojo? • If so, why do you think you forget? • Do you feel a void when you forget to use ClassDojo? 26. Do you think ClassDojo has any effect on your students other than behaviorally or academically? • If so, why do you think it has this effect? 27. Is there anything else I should know about how you view ClassDojo or how you implement it in your classroom that has not been covered?	

APPENDIX D

Interview Outline	Comments/Reflection
Interview Protocol Before the interview, I will: • Ensure the participant has returned a signed informed consent document to me. • Remind the participant that the interview will be audio recorded. • Remind the participant that their identity will remain anonymous. • Remind them that they can withdraw from participation in the study at any time. • Ask that the participant feel free to communicate openly and elaborate on their answers. • Remind them that I am interested in what they *think* and that there is not necessarily a "right" answer. • Preview the format of the interview (especially regarding my potential need to probe answers deeper and ask follow-up questions). • Ask the student to feel free to have me rephrase a question if they do not understand what I am asking.	

• Remind the student that they can take as much time as they want to formulate answers. • Tell the participant that repeated answers are acceptable as there may be some overlap in the answers to the questions asked.	
Introduction Interviewer Script: *I would like to start with just a few questions about your experience with ClassDojo in the past and present.* 1. If someone asked you what ClassDojo is, what would you tell them? 2. Have you had other teachers that have used ClassDojo? 3. Would you say that you typically get positive points or negative points on ClassDojo? • If typically positive, have you *ever* got a negative point? 4. Do you like getting positive points? Do you want to get as many as you can? Why? 5. Do you dislike getting negative points? Why? 6. Why do you think your teacher uses ClassDojo?	

Research Question 1 Interviewer Script: *The next set of questions deal with how ClassDojo might be used to help students behave well. In this set of questions, when I say "control a class," I mean whatever a teacher does to cause students to behave well and keep other students from misbehaving.* 7. Do you think ClassDojo helps a teacher keep control of a class? • Why do you think so? 8. Do you think a teacher can keep better control of a class when students are able to see their ClassDojo points during class? Why? 9. Do you think a teacher can keep better control of a class when students are able to hear the sounds that ClassDojo makes? Why? 10. Do you think ClassDojo would work as well if students could not see their points or hear the sounds that it makes? • Why do you think this? 11. Does ClassDojo ever not work well to the point that it almost seems useless to try to use it (such as with experiencing technical difficulties)?	

12. Does ClassDojo help you or your classmates behave the best during a certain activity (such as group work, lecture, individual seat work)? • Are there certain activities when you feel ClassDojo is not useful at all?	
Research Question 2 Interviewer Script: *The next couple questions deal with student achievement, or how well students do in getting grades.* 13. Tell me about how you feel when you get a positive point in ClassDojo. • How do you act when you feel this way? • Do you think that feeling and/or acting that way affects the grades you get? 14. Tell me about how you feel when you get a negative point in ClassDojo. • How do you act when you feel this way? • Do you think that feeling and/or acting that way affects the grades you get? 15. Do you believe ClassDojo helps students do better in class (as far as learning stuff)?	

• If so, is it a big difference? Do you think ClassDojo helps you learn *a lot* better? Why? • If not, why do you think this is?	
Research Questions 3 and 4 Interviewer Script: *The next questions have to do with what technology you think is important for using ClassDojo. You do not have to worry about how expensive technology is. Just pretend that we have all the money in the world. You can let your imagination run wild. You can even talk about technology that you do not normally see in a classroom.* 16. What technology do you think teachers need in order to use ClassDojo the best way possible? • If less than ideal, can ClassDojo still be used well with the limited technology of the teacher? 17. What technology does your teacher use with ClassDojo right now? 18. How "techie" does a teacher need to be to use ClassDojo? What do they need to know how to do with technology? (Be prepared to explain "techie.")	

• If answer is “not much” or something similar, ask if just about anyone could do it. 19. Do you think it is better to use ClassDojo with technology that cannot be easily moved (like a desktop) or with mobile technology (like a tablet)? Why? 20. Do you think there is anything a teacher needs to do before class every day to get ready to use ClassDojo the best way possible? • If needed give some examples: (turning on a computer, signing into an app, etc.)	
Conclusion Interviewer Script: *The final set of questions has to do with any other information that you can give that I have not learned from you already.* 21. Have you ever talked about ClassDojo with another student who is not in this class? • If so, what did you tell them? • If not, pretend you were going to tell a friend about ClassDojo today. What would you say to them about it?	

22. Does your teacher ever forget to use ClassDojo? • If so, why do you think your teacher forgets? • Does it feel like something is missing when your teacher forgets to use ClassDojo? • In those times, do you wish that your teacher would remember, or do you not care whether they use it or not? 23. We have talked about how ClassDojo helps you behave better/worse and how it does/does not help you do better in school. Do you think ClassDojo is good for anything else? (Take your time to think.) • If so, why do you think so? 24. Is there anything else I should know about how you feel about ClassDojo or how your teacher uses it?	

APPENDIX E

Focus Group Outline	Comments/Reflection
Focus Group Protocol Before the focus group, I will: • Ensure the participants have returned a signed informed consent document to me. • Remind the participants that the focus group will be audio recorded. • Remind the participants that their identity will remain anonymous. • Remind the participants that they can withdraw from participation in the study at any time. • Ask that the participants feel free to communicate openly and elaborate on their answers. • Remind them that I am interested in what they *think* and that there is not necessarily a "right" answer. • Preview the format of the focus group (especially regarding how I want to hear them interact with one another and expound on one another's ideas). • Ask the participants to feel free to have me rephrase a question if they do not understand what I am asking.	

• Remind the participants that they can take as much time as they want to formulate answers. • Tell the participants that repeated answers are acceptable as there may be some overlap in the answers to the questions asked.	
Introduction Researcher Script: *I would like to start with just a few questions about your experience with ClassDojo in the past and present.* 1. If someone asked you what ClassDojo is, what would you tell them? 2. What typically happens with the points on ClassDojo? 3. Think back to a time when you got a few positive points. How did you feel? 4. Think back to a time when you got a few negative points. How did you feel? 5. Why do you think your teacher uses ClassDojo?	

Research Question 1 Researcher Script: *The next set of questions deal with how ClassDojo might be used to help students behave well. In this set of questions, when I say "control a class," I mean whatever a teacher does to cause students to behave well and keep other students from misbehaving.* 6. What is it about ClassDojo that helps a teacher keep control of a class? 7. If a teacher is using ClassDojo mainly to control a class, how important do you think it is for him/her to let students be able to see their ClassDojo points during class? 8. If a teacher is using ClassDojo mainly to control a class, how important do you think it is for him/her to let students be able to hear the ClassDojo sounds during class? 9. How well do you think ClassDojo would help a teacher control a class if students could not see their points or hear the sounds that it makes?	

10. Can you think of a time when ClassDojo did not work well to the point that it almost seemed useless to try to use it (such as with experiencing technical difficulties)? 11. Does ClassDojo help you or your classmates behave the best during a certain activity (such as group work, lecture, individual seat work)? • Can you think of any activities when you feel ClassDojo was not useful at all?	

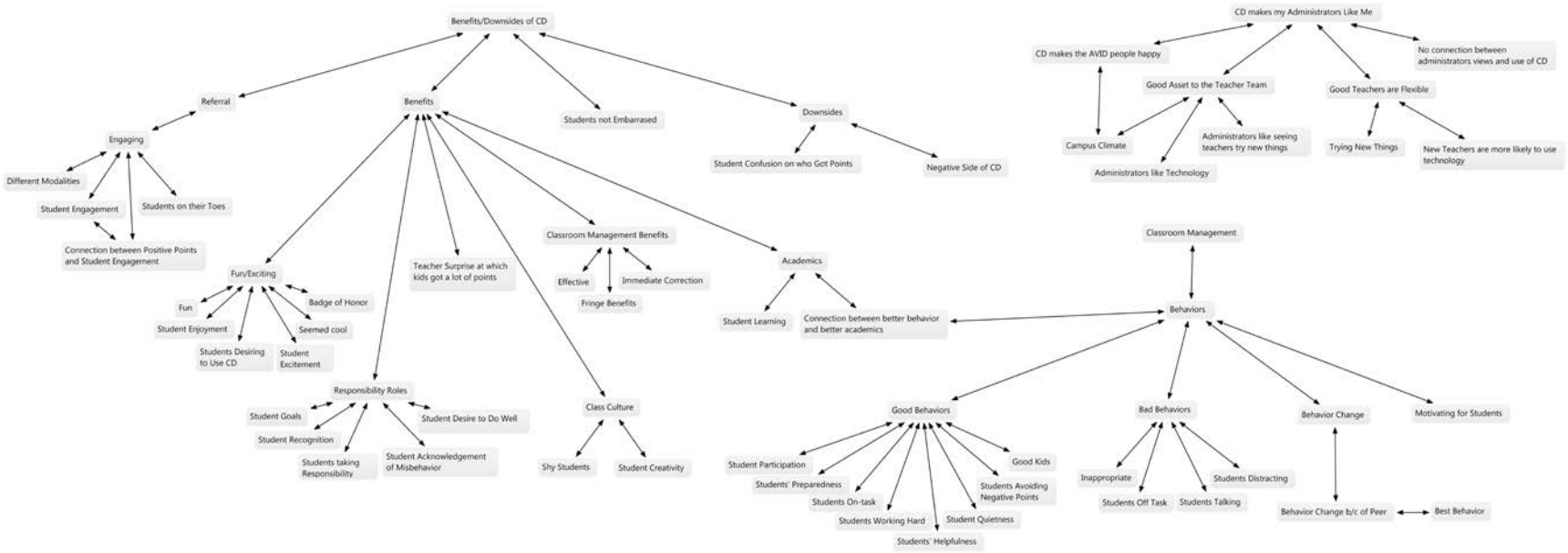
Research Question 2 Researcher Script: *The next couple questions deal with student achievement, or how well students do in getting grades.* 12. Tell me about how you feel when you get a positive point in ClassDojo. • How do you act when you feel this way? • How, if at all, do you think that feeling and/or acting that way affects the grades you get? 13. Tell me about how you feel when you get a negative point in ClassDojo. • How do you act when you feel this way? • How, if at all, do you think that feeling and/or acting that way affects the grades you get? 14. How much, if at all, do you believe ClassDojo helps students do better in class (as far as learning stuff)?	

Research Questions 3 and 4 Researcher Script: *The next questions have to do with what technology you think is important for using ClassDojo. You do not have to worry about how expensive technology is. Just pretend that we have all the money in the world. You can let your imagination run wild. You can even talk about technology that you do not normally see in a classroom.* 15. What technology do you think teachers need in order to use ClassDojo the best way possible? 16. What is the minimum technology that a teacher would need to use ClassDojo at all? 17. How "techie" does a teacher need to be to use ClassDojo? What do they need to know how to do with technology? (Be prepared to explain "techie.") • If answer is "not much" or something similar, could just about anyone do it? 18. Imagine a scenario where ClassDojo is only being used with stationary technology (like a desktop). How does that classroom compare to a classroom that uses it with mobile technology (like a tablet)?	

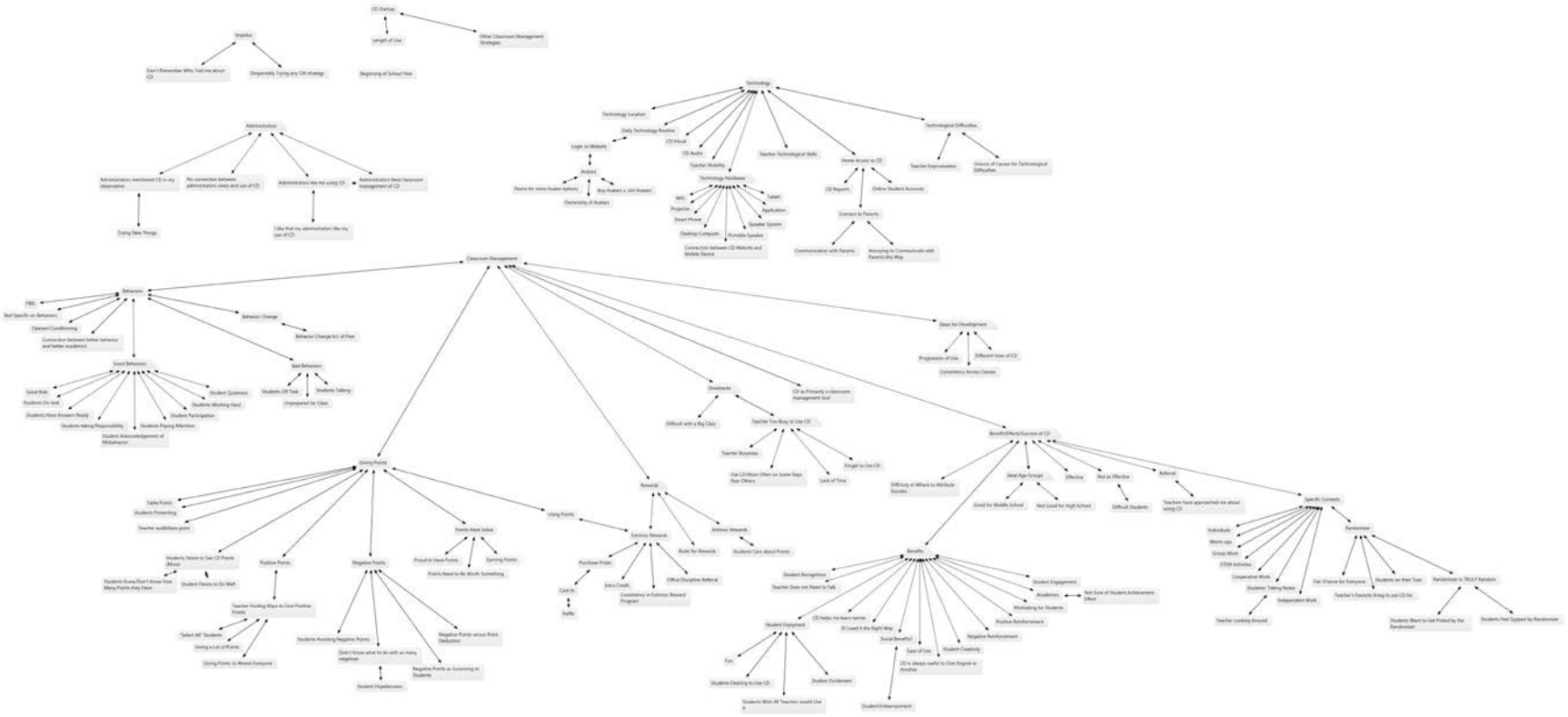
19. What do you think a teacher needs to do before class every day to get ready to use ClassDojo the best way possible? • If needed give some examples: (turning on a computer, signing into an app, etc.)	
Conclusion Researcher Script: *The final set of questions has to do with any other information that you can give that I have not learned from you already.* 20. How do you feel when your teacher forgets to use ClassDojo? 21. We have talked about how ClassDojo helps you behave better/worse and how it does/does not help you do better in school. Do you think ClassDojo is good for anything else? (Take your time to think.) 22. Imagine you were to talk about ClassDojo with another student who is not in this class. What would you tell them about it? 23. Is there anything else I should know about how you feel about ClassDojo or how your teacher uses it?	

APPENDIX F

Concept Map for Teacher A



Concept Map for Teacher B



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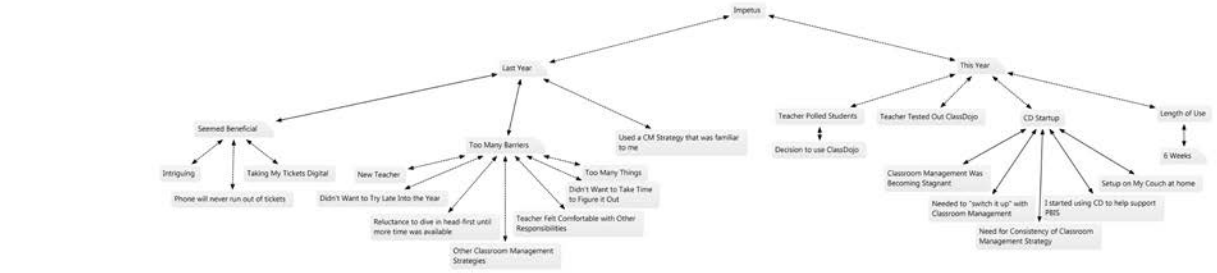
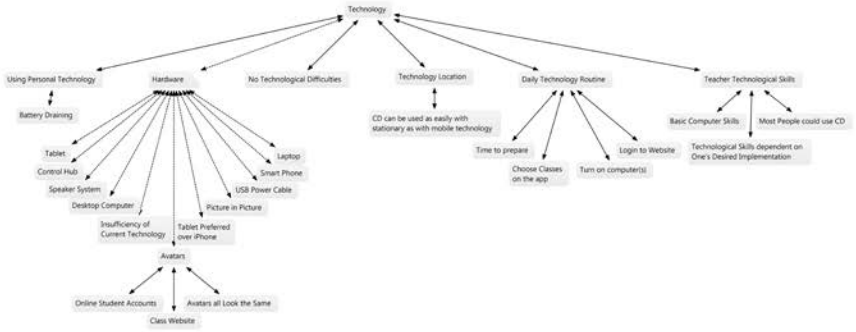
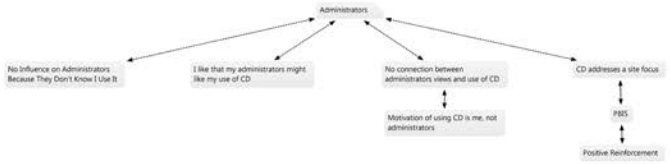
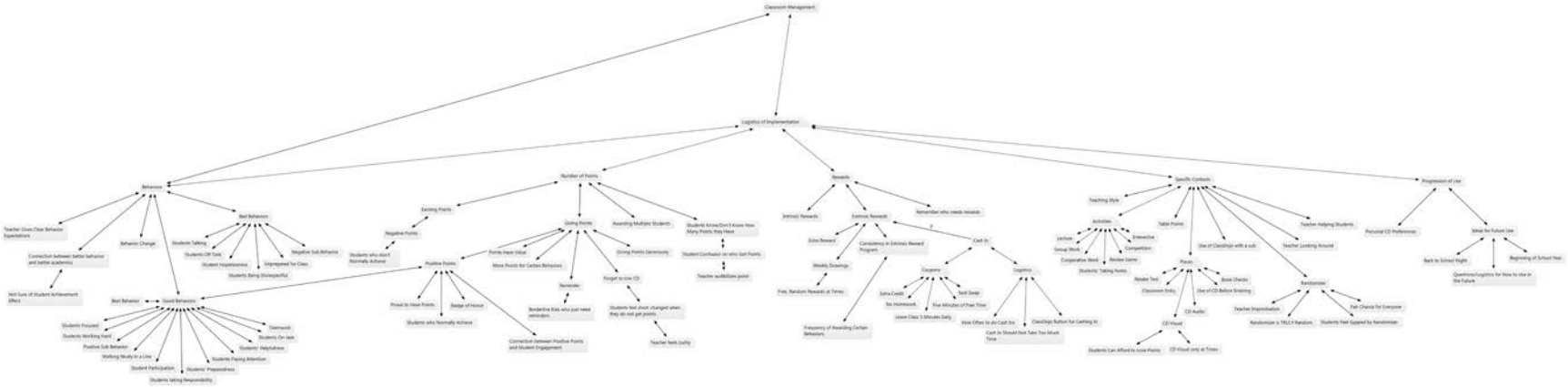
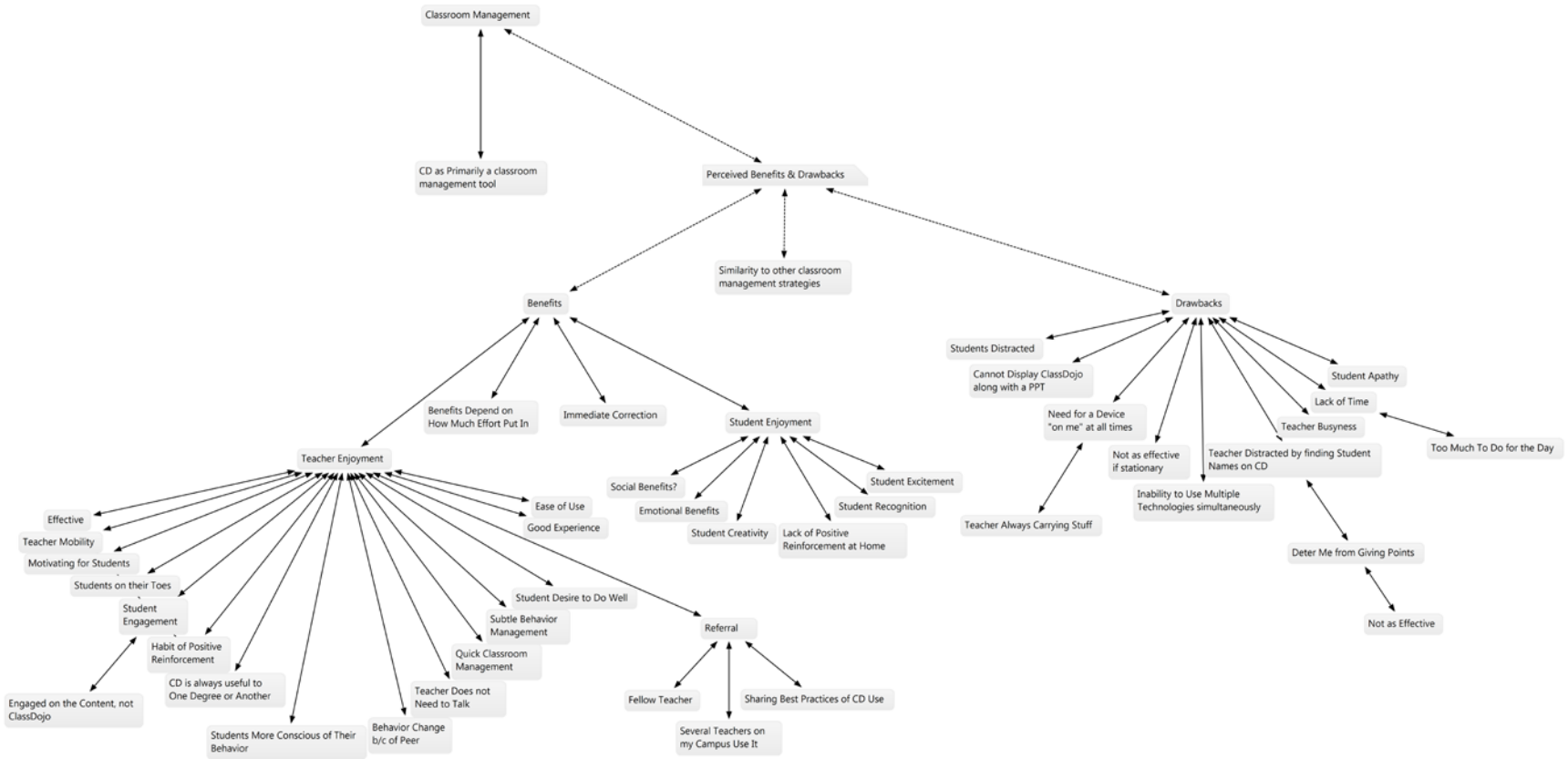


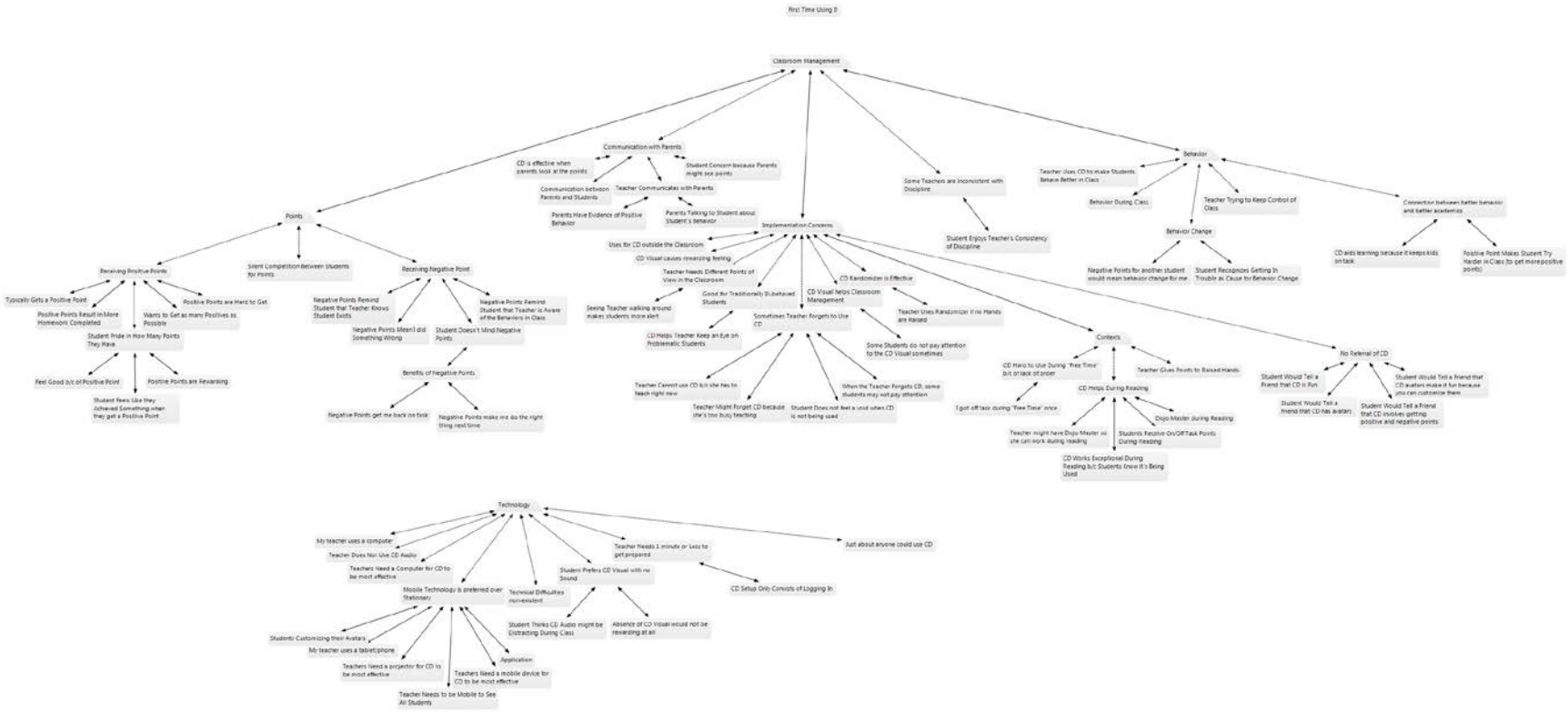







Classroom Management
CD as Primarily a classroom management tool
Perceived Benefits & Drawbacks
Similarity to other classroom management strategies
Benefits
Drawbacks
Benefits Depend on How Much Effort Put In
Immediate Correction
Student Enjoyment
Teacher Enjoyment
Students Distracted
Cannot Display ClassDojo along with a PPT
Student Apathy
Lack of Time
Need for a Device "on me" at all times
Teacher Busyness
Too Much To Do for the Day
Not as effective if stationary
Teacher Distracted by finding Student Names on CD
Inability to Use Multiple Technologies simultaneously
Teacher Always Carrying Stuff
Deter Me from Giving Points
Not as Effective
Social Benefits?
Student Excitement
Emotional Benefits
Student Recognition
Student Creativity
Lack of Positive Reinforcement at Home
Effective
Ease of Use
Teacher Mobility
Good Experience
Motivating for Students
Students on their Toes
Student Engagement
Student Desire to Do Well
Subtle Behavior Management
Habit of Positive Reinforcement
Quick Classroom Management
CD is always useful to One Degree or Another
Teacher Does not Need to Talk
Engaged on the Content, not ClassDojo
Students More Conscious of Their Behavior
Behavior Change b/c of Peer
Referral
Fellow Teacher
Sharing Best Practices of CD Use
Several Teachers on my Campus Use It

Concept Map for Student A1



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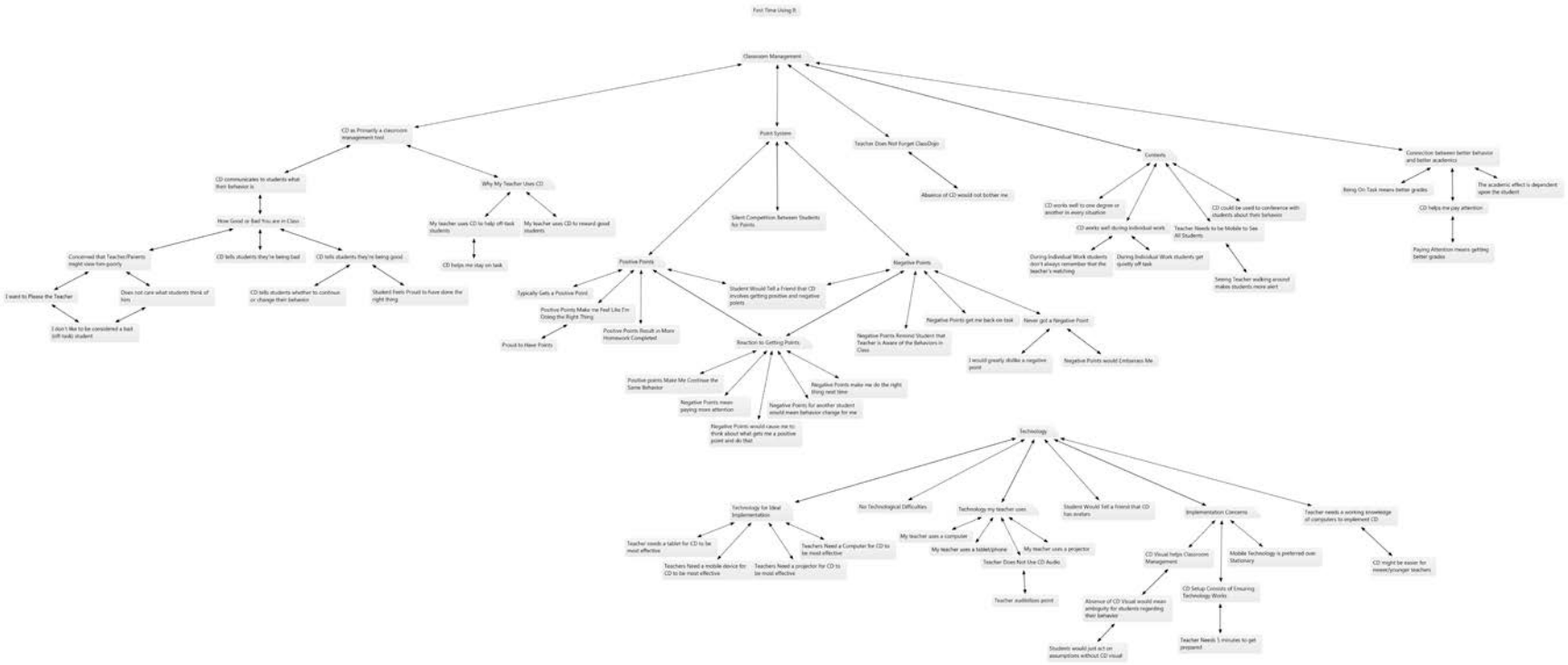
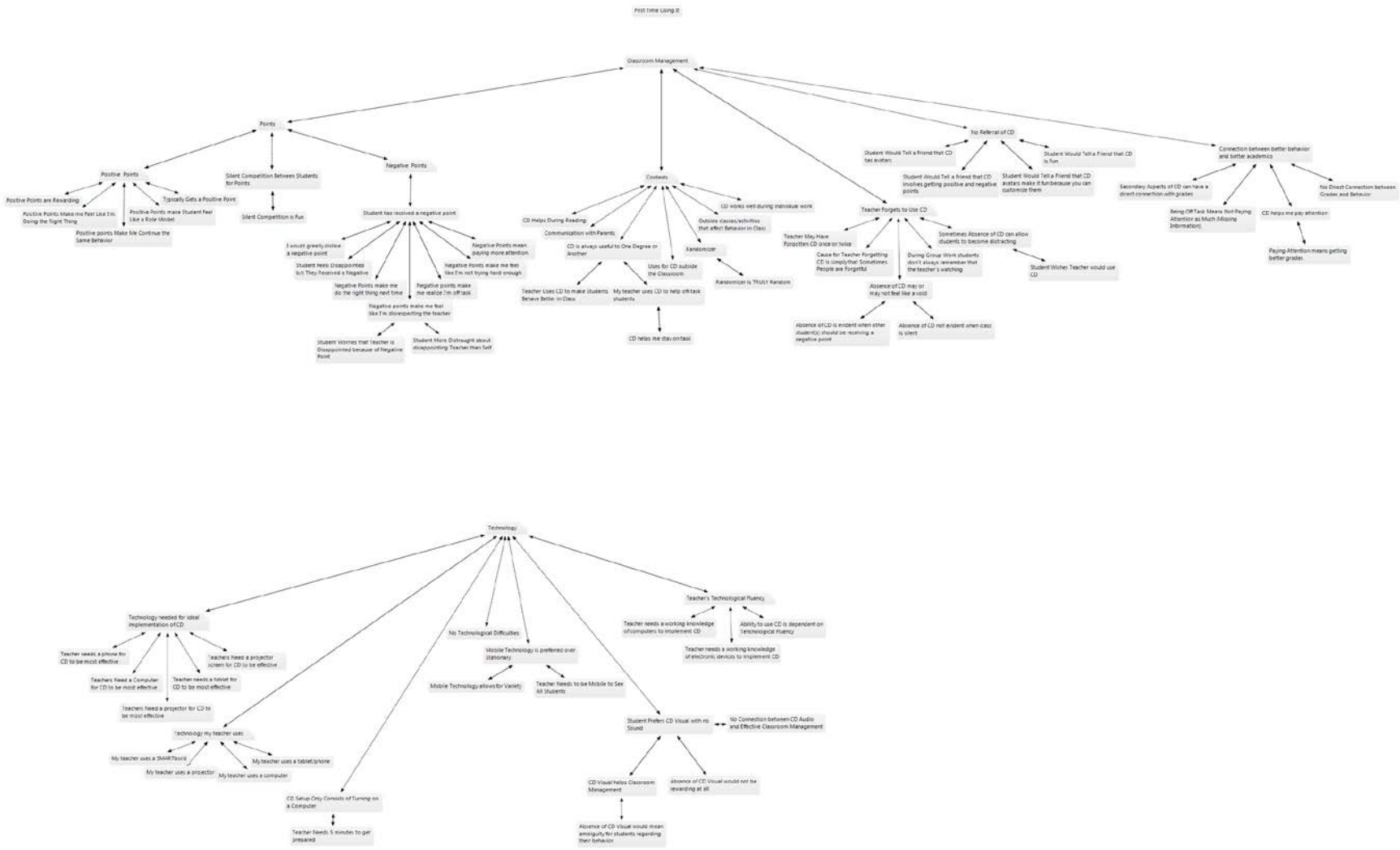
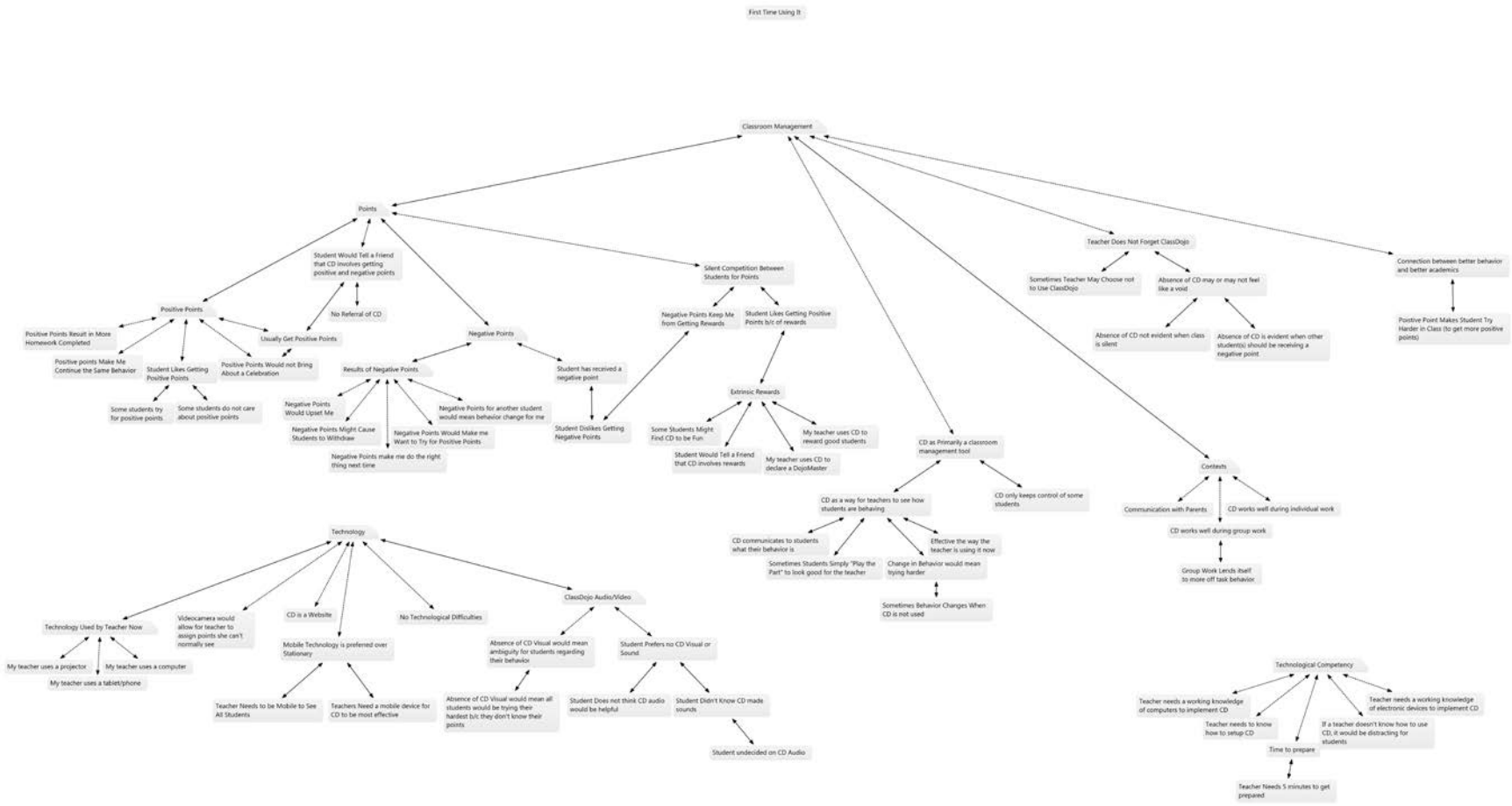


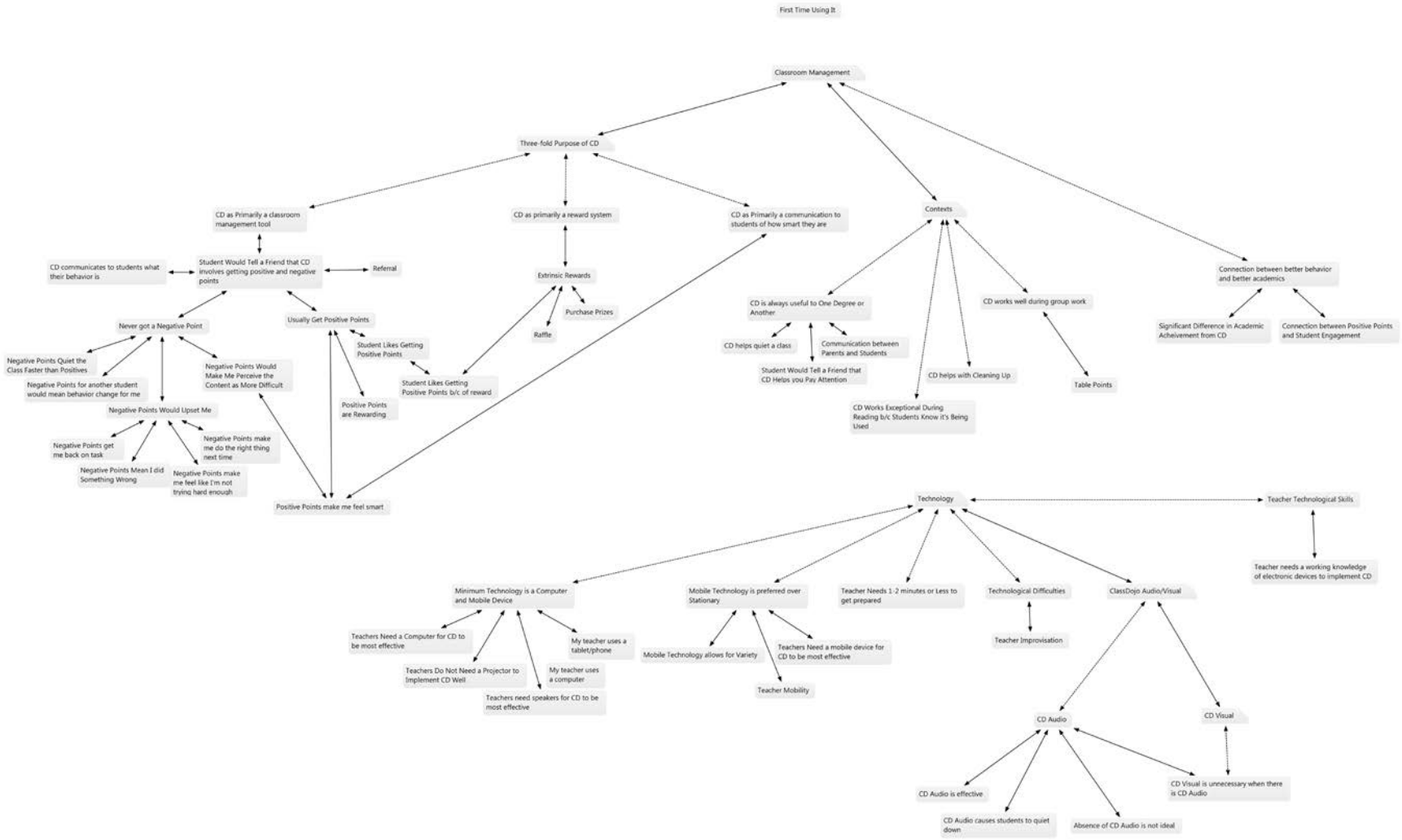
Concept Map for Student A3



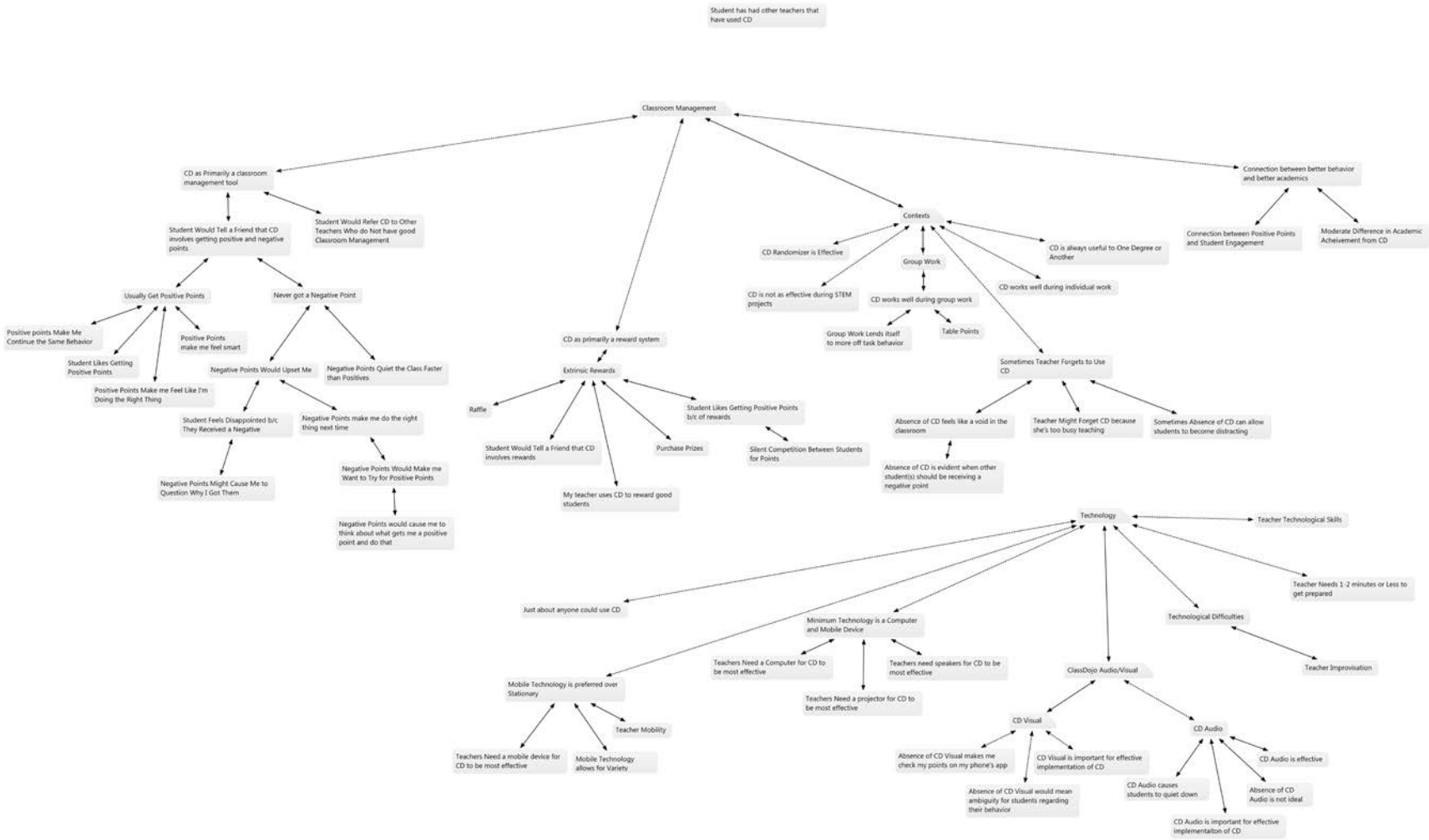
Concept Map for Student A4



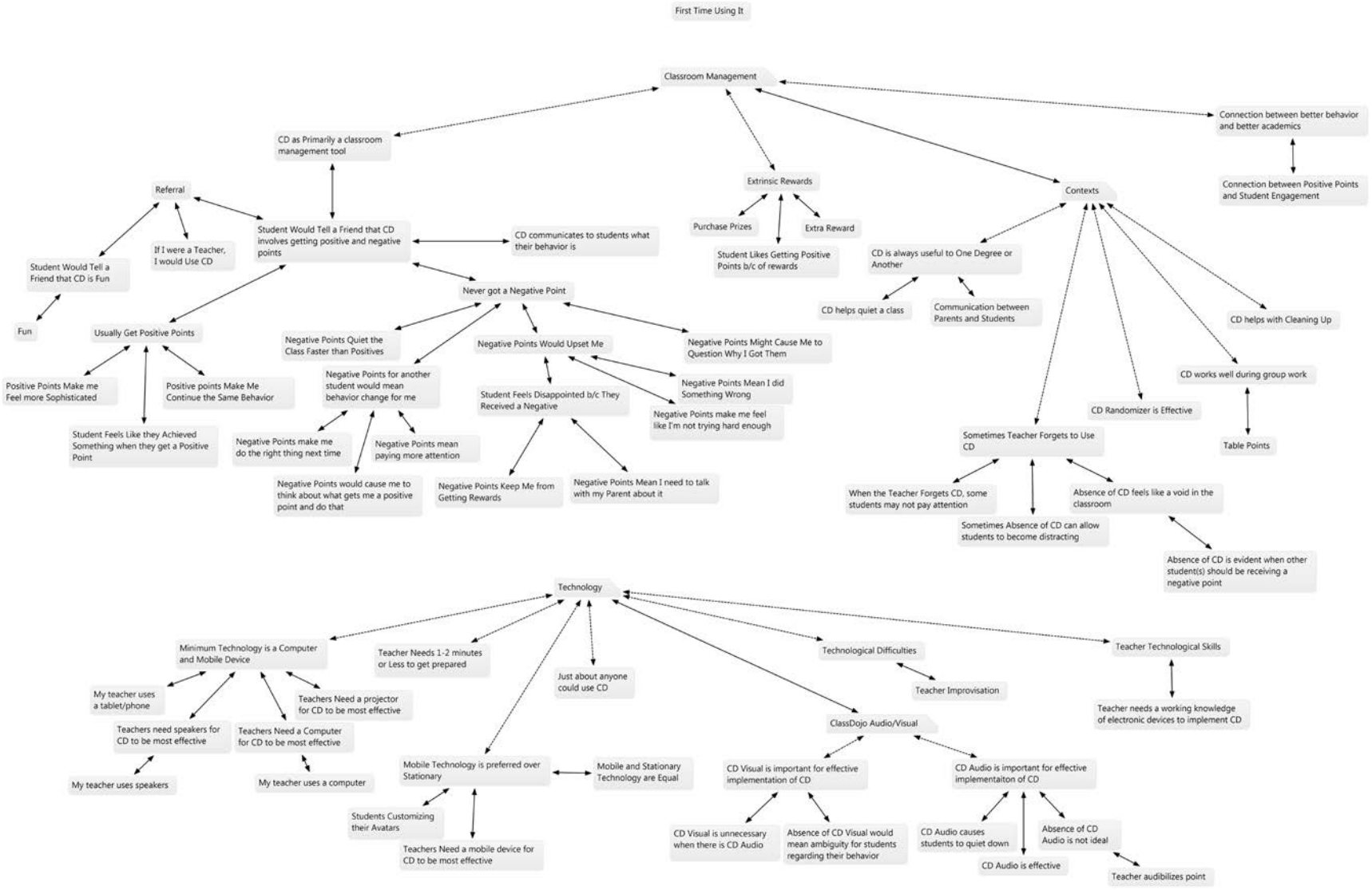
Concept Map for Student B1



Concept Map for Student B2



Concept Map for Student B3



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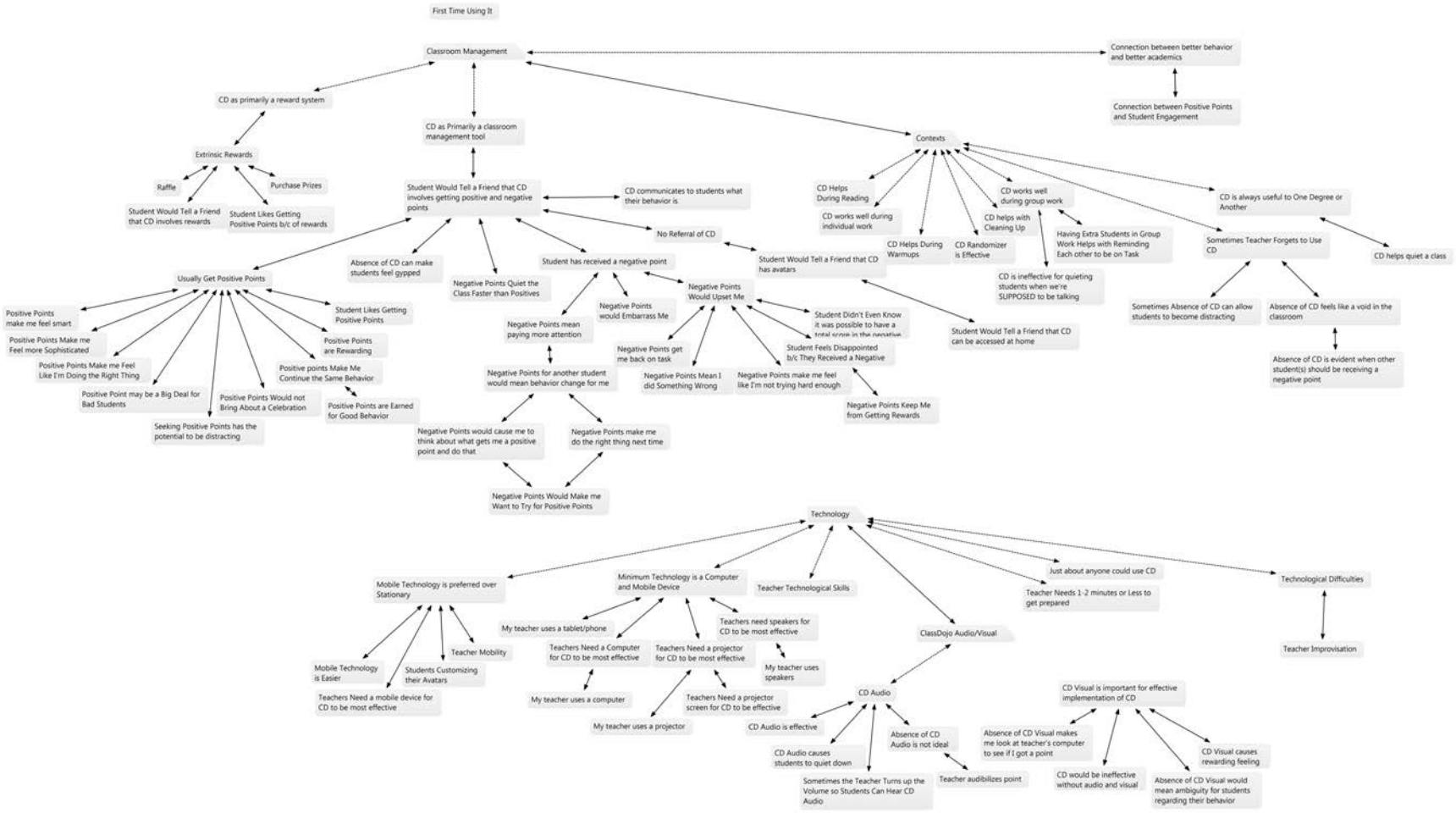
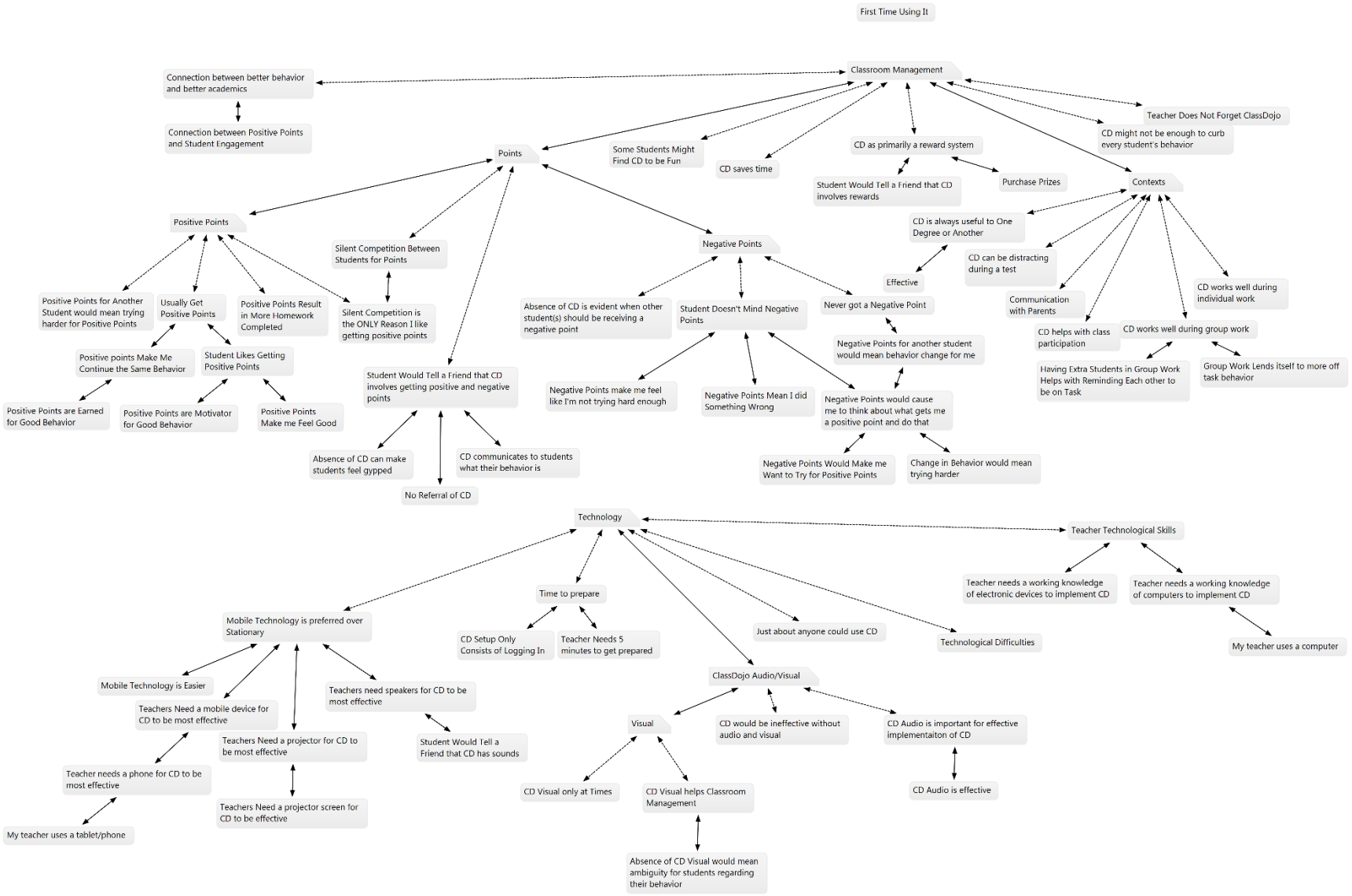


Concept Map for Student C1



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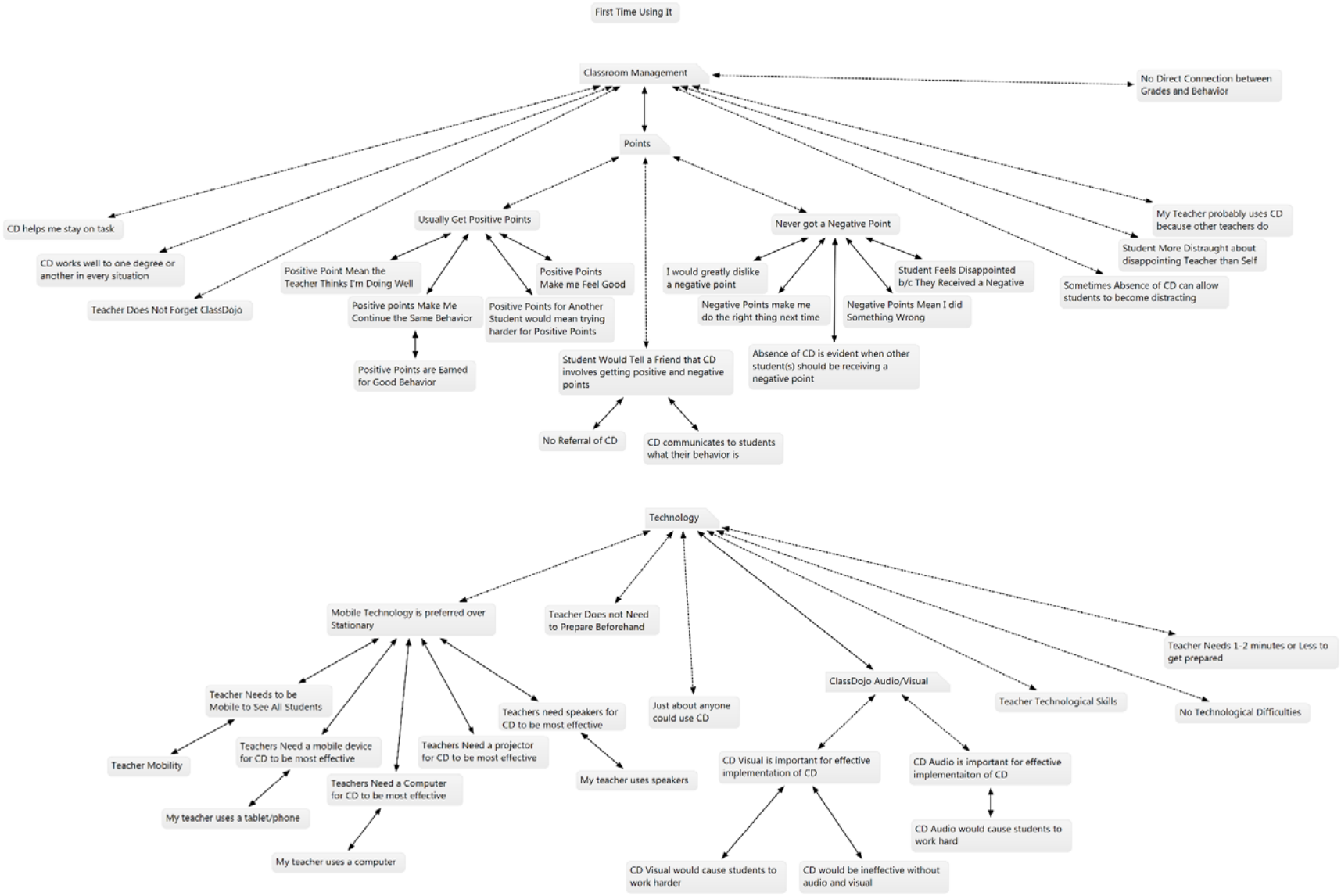
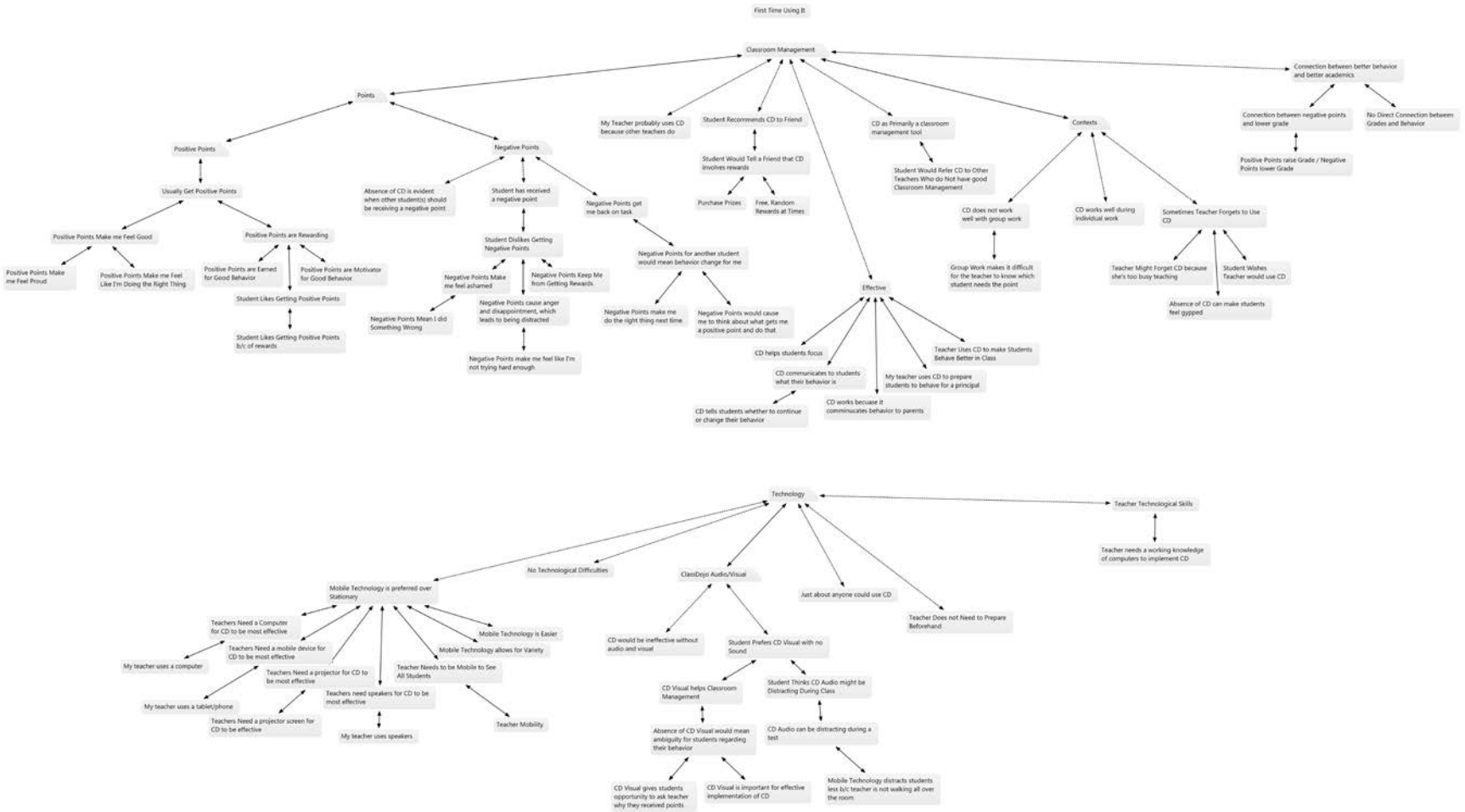


Concept Map for Student C3



Concept Map for Student C4