What do students think makes a great school?

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Overview

- AWE provides short, empirically validated, and solution focused assessments for students (aged 12-18 years) and adults (teachers/parents).
- We posit that gaining qualitative feedback from students is a key pathway to enable wellbeing co-creation in schools.
- N = 3,000 randomly selected responses; largely private schools, greater females.
- Student assessments consist of 29 questions, including two qualitative questions:
  - 1) “What one thing, more than anything else, makes your school a great place?”
  - 2) “What one thing, more than anything else, needs to change to make your school a great place?”
Analysis process:

- Deductive Thematic Analysis (DTA; Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used. This ‘top-down’ approach is best suited for research that is driven by a specific question.
- 1) Data familiarisation and identification of meaningful units.
- 2) Initial code generation.
- 3) Identification of themes.
- 4) Reviewing themes and sub-themes.
- 5) Defining themes.
- 6) Identification of extract examples for the final report.

(although presented in order, these phases were approached and organically revisited as the analysis progressed)
Themes

• What one thing, more than anything else, makes your school a great place?
Thank You

Your kindness means so much
Themes

• What one thing, more than anything else, makes your school a great place?
  – Relationships (that meet needs)
    • Friends
    • Good teachers (passionate, approachable)
  – Sense of safety (absence of bullying, supportive teachers)
  – School culture
    • a culture of great education and aspiration
    • a culture of acceptance and kindness (caring community)
    • a sense of great opportunities - variety of activities and educational options
Bloopers…

• “I like the soap dispensers”
• “air-con in every room is nice”
• “the bacon and egg wraps”
• “Being able to use the toasters at lunch”
Themes

• What one thing, more than anything else, *needs to change* to make your school a great place?
Themes

• What one thing, more than anything else, *needs to change* to make your school a great place?
  – Expectations (test pressure, stress levels)
  – Strict rules (uniforms, access to rooms/locations)
  – Homework quantity (study/life balance)
  – Food (quality, expense)
  – Communication – between students and teachers
  – Physical environment (air-conditioning, better lockers)
Bloopers...

- “all the ignorant up-tight pricks”
- “allowing headphones in class”
- “ban obvious fake tan”
- “have a designated nap time”
- “bring back chicken strips”