

An Analysis of a Survey about Hogwarts Houses



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In the magical world of Harry Potter, every young witch or wizard is sent to school to learn magic. In Great Britain that school is called Hogwarts, and immediately upon arrival all first year students are sorted into one of four Houses: Gryffindor, Slytherin, Hufflepuff or Ravenclaw. Each house has its own set of characteristics and students are placed into a house, based on their personalities, by a magic hat. The house a student is placed in has a big impact on who they turn out to be in the story. There are general, often incorrect, biases held of each of the houses; Gryffindors are heroes, Slytherins are villains, Hufflepuffs are quiet and friendly, and Ravenclaws are studious and stuck up. However the actual traits attributed to each house are much more complex. The house of Gryffindor values bravery, daring, nerve, and chivalry. Slytherin house values ambition, cunning and resourcefulness. Hufflepuff values hard work, dedication, patience, loyalty, and fair play, and Ravenclaw values intelligence, knowledge, and wit.

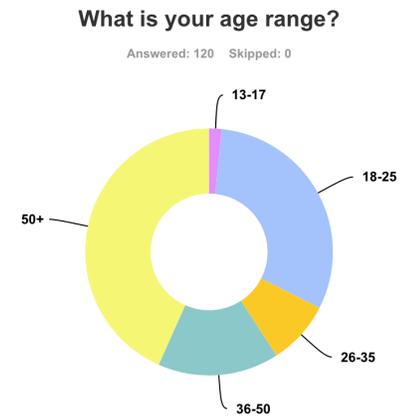
For a whole generation of kids who are now becoming adults Harry Potter was a huge part of their childhoods and, in many ways, was real. I am a proud member of the “Harry Potter generation”. The Harry Potter books were published in the United States in 1999 when I was three years old, and right around that time my mom started reading the books to me. When I was in 1st grade the first movie came out, and a movie or book was released every year until my sophomore year of high school. Harry Potter shaped my childhood and in many ways who I am as a person today. This is true of a lot of people that I know in my age group. Most adults now that were children or teenagers in the 2000s know at least a little bit about Harry Potter, and a lot of adults who had kids growing up in that time period are familiar with Harry Potter as well. Within my group of friends everyone knows what Hogwarts House they would be a member of

and take it very seriously. This concept has interested me for awhile, so I decided to throw together a little survey about Hogwarts Houses to see just how seriously people take them.

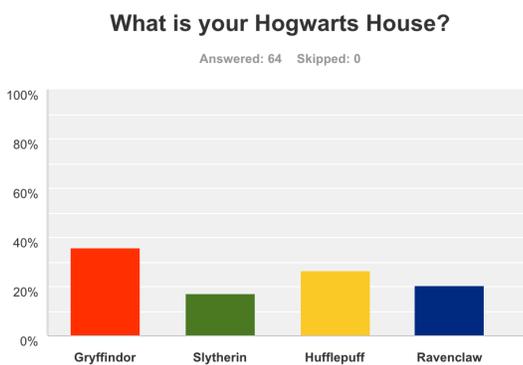
I shared my survey on Facebook and encouraged my friends and family to take the survey and pass it on to their own groups of friends on Facebook. After a little over 24 hours I had 120 responses and closed the survey. The demographics range from 13-17 to 50+, with 43.33% of the participants 50 or older (my mom shared it and her friends were very enthusiastic). Of everyone who took the survey, 53.33% did know their

Hogwarts House and the percentage of each age range who knew their Hogwarts House went down with each subsequent increasing age range, starting at 100% of 13-17 year olds knowing their Hogwarts House and ending with only 28.85% of those 50+ knowing their Hogwarts House. For the remainder of my analysis I am just going to focus on the 53.33% (64 people) who did know their Hogwarts House.

As I mentioned previously there are a lot of biases related to the different houses. A lot of people have not wanted to be in Hufflepuff for years because it was considered a weak, lame house, where all those who did not fit in other houses ended up. However in recent years Hufflepuff has received a lot of support from various celebrities tied to Harry Potter. Many people also do not want to be in Slytherin house because it is associated with the “bad guys” and nobody wants to be called a bad guy. My survey showed some interesting statistics in which houses had the most members. Of the 64 people who claimed to know their Hogwarts house, 35.94% said they were Gryffindors. This is very unsurprising as Gryffindor is the house the main characters and heroes of the Harry Potter stories claim. It usually has the most appeal. What was



surprising was the second most popular house: Hufflepuff. Despite a track record of being looked down upon 26.56% of those surveyed were Hufflepuffs. Considering Hufflepuff values things like hard work, loyalty, and fair play, I would say this is a good sign. The next most common house was Ravenclaw, trailing Hufflepuff by about 6%, with 20.31% of those surveyed identifying as Ravenclaws. And bringing up the rear we had 17.19% of those surveyed identifying as Slytherins. In day to day life, one runs across Gryffindors and Hufflepuffs far more



often than Ravenclaws and Slytherins, so this was pretty on par with my own experiences. When looking at the results of the question “Do you think your Hogwarts House is an important part of who you are as a person?”, the responses were split evenly between “yes” and “no” with both coming in at 44.44%, and

7.94% of those surveyed saying they did not care. This was interesting as an equal number of people considered this fictional label as an important part of their identity, which is just fascinating.

I want to take a moment to focus on the responses from those in each individual house, starting with Gryffindor. Gryffindor scored highest of any house in the age groups of 13-17 and 50+, as well as scoring the highest for the highest percentage of people not having taken the Pottermore sorting quiz (43.48%) (Pottermore is the official Harry Potter website, with a sorting quiz many consider to be the only true way to know your house). Gryffindor also had the highest number of members owning at least 1 piece of house related merchandise (56.52%). 37.78% Gryffindors claimed the majority of their friends also belonged to Gryffindor, with Ravenclaw

and “Don’t know” the next highest choices tying at 17.39% each. As far as the importance of their house to who they are as people, Gryffindors ranked third with 43.48% considering their house an important factor of their identities. The brave, daring members of Gryffindor appear to prefer their own company, have a good amount of house pride, and do not seem to respect the authority of Pottermore. Now on to Hufflepuff.

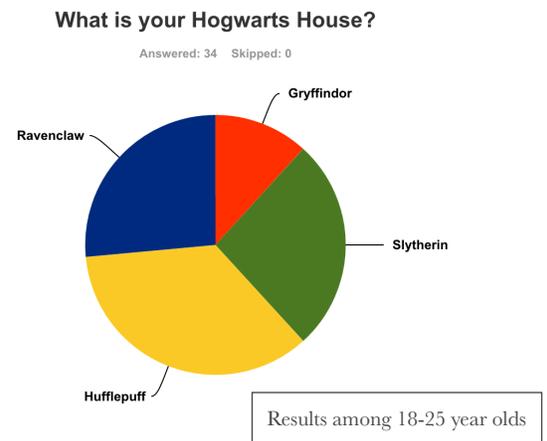
Hufflepuff was the most popular house among 18-25 year olds with 35.29% of the at age bracket identifying as Hufflepuff and with 70.59% of the house falling in this age bracket.

88.24% of Hufflepuffs had taken the Pottermore quiz, though only 29.41% own at least one piece of house related merchandise. As far as their friends’ houses go, its a four way tie between Slytherin, Hufflepuff, “Don’t know” and “The majority of my friends don’t belong to one particular house” at 23.53%, 5.88% said the majority of their friends were

Gryffindors and none claimed to have the majority of their friends in Ravenclaw.

There was once again a tie when it came to the importance of their house to them, 47.06% claimed both yes and no, with 5.88% selecting “Don’t Care”. The hardworking and loyal Hufflepuffs seem to have varied friend groups and were split on whether their Hogwarts house was an important part of their identities.

Ravenclaw was most popular among those 18-25 with 69.23% of the house being in this age bracket. 100% of Ravenclaws had taken the Pottermore sorting quiz, and 53.85% of Ravenclaws did not own any house related merchandise. Among Ravenclaws a 46.15% majority claim that “the majority of my friends don’t belong to one particular house” and 50% thought



that it was an important part of who they are as a person (41.67% - no and 8.33% - “don’t care”). The wise Ravenclaws obviously love a good quiz, and, as with the Hufflepuffs, have a varied group of friends.

Finally, we come to Slytherins. Slytherin, like Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw, was dominated by 18-25 year olds, who constituted 81.82% of the house in my survey. 90.91% of Slytherins had taken the Pottermore quiz, and have a good amount of house pride with 54.54% of Slytherins surveyed owned 1 or more house related pieces of merchandise. The category regarding which house the majority of their friends belonged to was very interesting. Slytherins tied between Hufflepuffs and “Don’t know” for the house to which the highest amount of their friends

belonged. Slytherins were the most split of any house on whether their house was an important part of who they were as a person. 36.36% of Slytherins said yes, 27.27% said no, 18.18% said they did not care, and 18.18% answering other (including responses like “sometimes” and “No, but it’s definitely accurate as to who I am as a person”). Overall, the resourceful Slytherins had a good



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amount of house pride, and seem to have an interesting tie with Hufflepuffs, even if did have the smallest amount of members among those surveyed.

One of the questions that I thought had the most interesting results was “Have you ever judged someone else based off their Hogwarts House?”. Overall, the majority of every house answered “No”, which can be interpreted to show that Harry Potter has taught acceptance among its audience, or simply that it’s a fictional construct and foolish to judge someone based off of

something that does not really exist within our world. What is most interesting about the responses to this question though is the order the houses fall into when looking at “Yes” answers. The house most likely to judge someone else based off of their own was Ravenclaw with 38.46%. Gryffindor was next with 30.43%, closely followed by Hufflepuff with 29.41%. Funnily enough, the house regularly considered the “mean” or “shrewd” house, Slytherin, came in last with 27.27% having judged someone based off of their house.

At the end of the day, what all of this data shows, is that Harry Potter really has affected people. It is so ingrained in so many people’s lives that they not only have taken the time to discover what Hogwarts house they belong to, spend money on house related merchandise and discuss the houses with friends, but people do judge others based off of their Hogwarts houses. Regardless of whether the Hogwarts houses are accurate interpretations and measures of personality, one thing is sure; Hogwarts will always be home to millions of people around the world.

