

Intervention of Bar/Restaurant Research-Data Analysis

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Abstract:

Over the past decade, there have been several reality TV shows based on the concept of an industry expert conducting an “intervention” for a struggling business such as a restaurant, hotel or hair salon. At the end of every episode, the businesses featured in the show appear to have been transformed and full of happy customers. But is this more “reality” or just “TV”? In this research we examine the long-term survival rate of bars and restaurants “rescued” in 3 popular reality TV shows.

Methodology:

We began by selecting three shows whose primary goal is to bring failing businesses out of their current struggle. These businesses include both restaurants and bars. Although similar, it must be stated that they do have slight differences. Due to timely-ness, only the first four seasons of each of the three shows were studied. We researched when the “intervention” took place (which in some cases was months before the episode aired on television). We then researched if each business was still open and if not, when it closed. The median lifespan of new restaurants in the United States and Ireland is approximately 4.5 years (Lou and Stark, 2014) and (Healy and Iomaire, 2019) so we only plotted our results for the first 4.5 years (54 months).

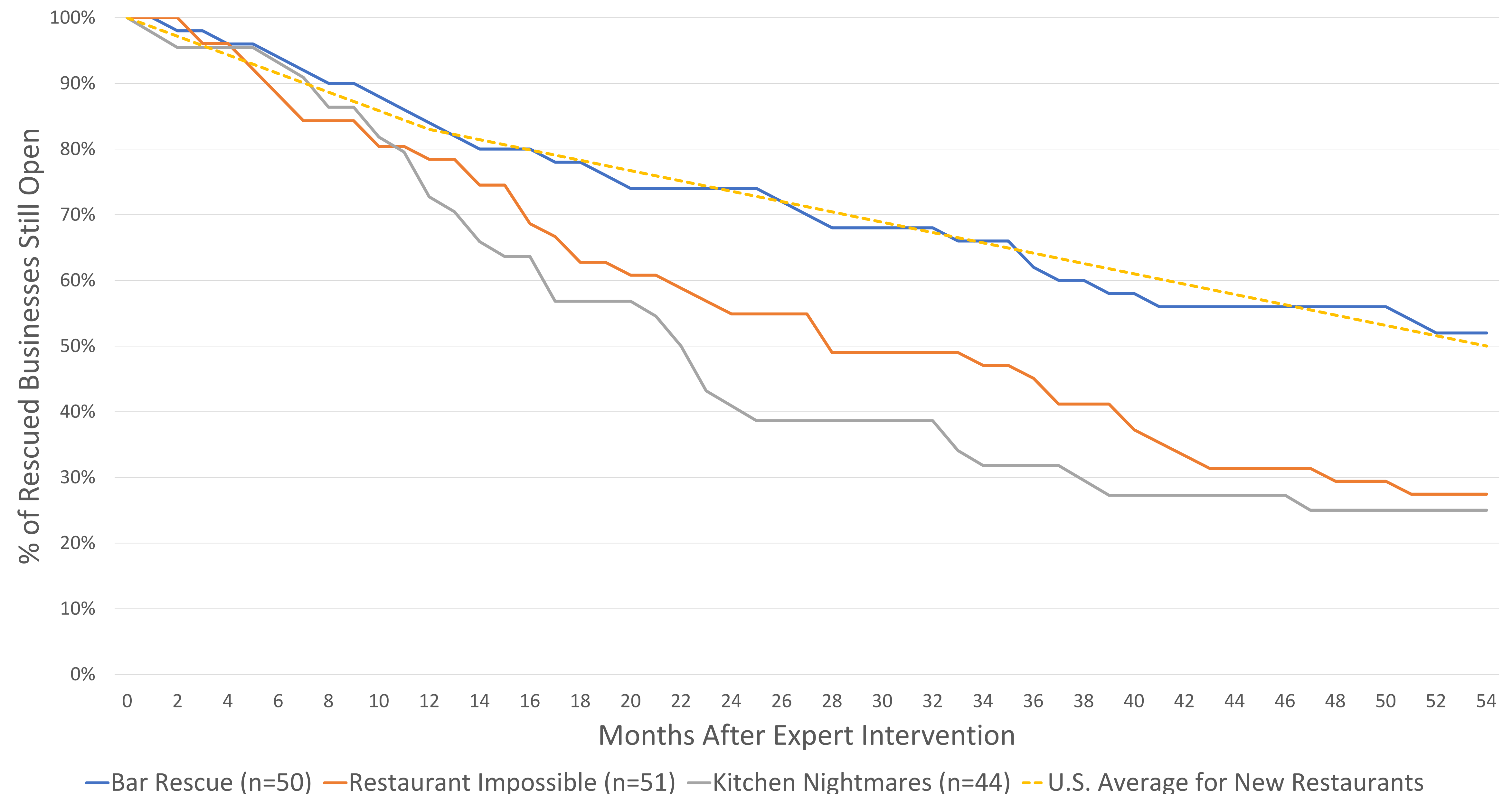
Discoveries:

- It was discovered that the shows Restaurant Impossible (hosted by Chef Robert Irvine), and Kitchen Nightmares (hosted by Chef Gordon Ramsey) had much lower success rates in keeping businesses open compared to the show Bar Rescue (hosted by Jon Taffer).
- The survivability of struggling businesses featured in the show Bar Rescue closely tracked the average performance of new restaurants in the both the United States and Ireland.

Conclusion:

Contrary to the impression created by the final scene in each episode Restaurant Impossible and Kitchen Nightmares, approximately ¼ of those businesses close within 1 year and ½ are closed within 2 years. In contrast, the failure rate of businesses featured on Bar Rescue is about ½ the failure rate of the other 2 shows which suggests the changes implemented during Jon Taffer’s interventions are more effective than the changes implemented by Chef Robert Irvine and Chef Gordon Ramsey.

Survival Rate of Bars and Restaurants Featured on Reality TV Shows



Next Steps:

After evaluating the analysis pertaining to the success rate amongst these shows, a second study was started to further investigate the progressive changes that each of these shows initiated to the establishments. This study is being conducted through a thorough viewing of each of the episodes listed in the first four seasons for each of the three shows. By evaluating the changes made to the establishments we hope to discover what potentially caused Bar Rescue to have such a significantly higher success rate in comparison to the other television series.

Studies Cited:

- Luo, Tian & Stark, Philip. (2014). Only the Bad Die Young: Restaurant Mortality in the Western US. <https://ui.adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/2014arXiv1410.8603L>
- Healy, J. & Iomaire, M. (2019). Calculating restaurant failure rates using longitudinal census data. *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology*, 17(4), 350-372.

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