

A Review on Challenges Faced by Bartenders and Strategies for Beverage Control during Operations

Rajeshree S. Pol*, Sarika Joshi**

Abstract

It is true that bartenders play a key role with respect to the Bar operations. However, mostly bartenders themselves face lot of challenges, especially with regard to the customer demands and work pressure during peak hours. This study used a survey and a questionnaire method to assess the challenges of bartenders working in various pubs, bars and nightclubs. The study further focuses on what key measures can be taken to overcome the challenges faced by the bartenders.

Keywords: Bar Operations, Beverage Control

INTRODUCTION

The service industry comprises of hotels, restaurants, transportation, finance, vendoe management, other business-related services, National accounts classification (2011). A bar can be a defined as a place where alcoholic beverages are sold for consumption in the premises of bar for general public, Arora (2009). Bar is a licensed establishment, which serves alcoholic as well as non-alcoholic beverages to the guest. According to Oxford Dictionary, Bar is a counter in a pub, restaurant, or cafe across which drinks or refreshments are served. The classification of bar suggests that there can be a grouping bar or a lounge. Some type of bars can be a public bar, cocktail bar, sports bar, service bar, portable bar, minibar, etc. (Rutherford & O'Fallon, 2007). Bars can be classified in various ways, depending on the function of the bar, themes, interior of the bar, type of clientele, location, etc. According to Singaravelavan (2011), a bar may be a part of hotels, resorts, clubs casinos, etc. and it helps in generating a revenue for the hotel industry.

A Bartender is an employee from Food & Beverage Department who takes order, makes drinks, and serve them to customers. A Bartender may work at a variety of establishments, including bars, clubs, hotels, resorts, casinos, and restaurants. Bartenders basically interact with the guests and ensure that they have a unique experience at the BAR. Bartenders would accurately mix and serve the beverages to the guests in a friendly manner. Responsibilities of Bartender would involve, providing a service to the clientele by following a set standard recipe for beverages. They also have to adhere to the liquor laws while working at the bar. Taking orders and doing transactions is another responsibility that they do. One of the major tasks to perform is the inventory control procedure. It is expected from a bartender to behave in a responsible and professional behavior, (Kotschever & Tanke, 1996).

Bar Operations

Operating a Bar is never without challenges. Following functions have to be conducted by every Bar manager for the smooth functioning of a Bar and to have profitable business. Bar and beverage service operations need lack proper supervision and management Godsmark (2003). Walker (2009), highlighted that hotel industry is facing major challenge of having well trained and competent employees in the room service department.

Purchasing

This involves buying of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages of best quality at the best price. Some of the options for major supply of beverages are, Wine shippers, Wholesalers, Beverage Manufactures Cash & Carry

* Assistant Professor, AISSMS College of HMCT, Pune, Maharashtra, India. Email: rajeshreespol@gmail.com

** Assistant Professor, AISSMS College of HMCT, Pune, Maharashtra, India. Email: sarikaamitjoshi@gmail.com

Auctions that can be used for purchasing of beverages. This would also vary according to the types of the establishments, the storage facilities available at the site; and the purchasing capacity of the buyer.

Receiving

Receiving of the beverages has to be done carefully when they are delivered at the organization. The receiver should match the quality and the quantity, as well as the price as per the order.

Storing

Once the beverages are received at the establishment, they must be moved to the cellar and control and maintain at all times at dry and draught free temperature. Different temperature should be maintained for different variety of beverages, for example, a refrigerated temperature of 10-15° C is ideal for the storage of white and sparkling wines.

Cellar Records

Due to the high value of cellar stocks, certain records should be strictly maintained. These involves a cellar inwards book, Bin Card, Cellar Control Book, Inventory Register, Ullages and breakages records, etc.

Issuing of Beverages

Issuing of beverages is a very crucial task. It should take place during fix hours, only against a requisition signed by an authorized person. This requisition should be handed over beforehand so that the particular items are kept aside in advance. The following formula may be used to calculate the value of stock and purchases required.

$$\text{Opening stock} + \text{purchase} - \text{Closing stock} = \text{Total beverage consumed}$$

$$\text{Total beverage consumed} = \frac{\text{Beverage revenue}}{\text{Beverage revenue}}$$

Beverage Control

Beverage control is one of the major functions of Food & Beverage Department. Different methods are used to control bar operations, depending on the type and the

size of the organization. Some beverage control systems implemented are bar cost system, Par Stock system, Potential (or standard) sales value system, inventory system, etc. Beverage control can be defined as a process to direct, regulate, and restrain the actions of people so that the established goals of an enterprise may be achieved. (hospitalityU, 2012).

The restaurant Industry in India has developed in a big way due to rapid urbanization. Ways to overcome challenges faced by Indian restaurateurs are a unique selling point, building customer loyalty, operational costs, policy bottlenecks, initial and working capital.

Bar Cost System

It may be produced for each bar separately. Par stock system is an effective method of beverage control where par is established for each beverage. The Par level is determined at the beginning of the service of each day. This system is simple and easy to operate.

Potential (or Standard) Sales Value System

The purpose of this system is to control beverages sales. Beverage costs are set by setting a sales value on each bottle item in stock. The sales value of each drink is known as the potential (or standard) sale value. The system requires, established standards for a bottle code number system, drink recipes, drink sizes, glassware and par stocks.

The Inventory or 'Ounce' System

This method is known as the most accurate (non-automatic) method of determining how much beverage is sold. It is used when finding the cause of un-acceptable difference recorded between the actual and potential results in a beverage report. It is however a complicated and difficult system to operate. The advantage of this system is that it is based on the daily physical stock-take, giving opening and closing stock levels of bars and deduct any transfers. The total consumption of each kind of drink per sales bill has then to be compared with the actual consumption determined from the physical inventory and any adjustments.

Challenges Faced by Bartenders

Bartender jobs come with lot of responsibilities as well as challenges.

Busy and Strenuous Shifts

With busy hours, bartenders have to stand for longer hours, sometimes considering risks like slippery floor and broken glasses. Sometimes there may be last minute customers to cater to and may have vague orders, which adds to the stress to the bartender.

At times there are customers who vanish without paying the bills. This is quite a challenge for the bartender.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dadić, Maškarić Ribarić and Vlahov (2020): The purpose of this paper was to determine whether bars and restaurants realize and understand the importance of inventory management. It also examined their strategies regarding the order and the delivery of goods. A structured questionnaire was circulated in the Rijeka region, along with the expert interviews of some of the employees. The results of this study indicated that employees in bars and restaurants order the goods using efficient techniques and that they have a high level of understanding of monitoring the inventory levels. The study was carried out on bars and restaurants that are considered for a rapid stock turnover process.

Adanse, Atingah and George (2019): This research study was design to find out the inventory control systems in bar operations within the Bolgatanga Municipality. The study used the questionnaire method as well as interview method to gather primary data from the employees of the topmost bar in the state and gathered a detailed information of the inventory control systems. The results of the study concluded that bar operations, especially in the food processing industry largely use the physical counting technique as the major inventory control system.

Lee et al. (2019): The study examined various challenges and critical success factors (CSFs) of restaurants in Klang Valley, Malaysia. Issues related to staff, improper working conditions, unrealistic demands of the employee, changing trends, food safety procedures, location of

restaurants, stringent policies, hierarchy, limited resources etc. are some of the challenges identified.

Buvik and Scheffels (2019): This study explored bartenders' accounts of work-related drinking and discussed the impact of structural and cultural working conditions on drinking practices among staff. The primary data was collected by interviewing 21 in-depth interviews with bartenders from different venues in Oslo, Norway. The data analyses resulted that the bartenders emphasized that there is an availability of alcohol in their work environment. Secondly, they also mentioned that alcohol consumption is a way to deal with stress for them. And also, that alcohol consumption is a part of their life style.

Nain (2018): The study resulted that poor guest service can have an impact on hotel's brand. Major challenges like economic fluctuations, shortage of quality staff, changing technology, shift in technology, high guest demands, competitive market, cyber issues, etc. are the challenges faced by the industry. Hotels need to overcome these challenges and formulate strategies for their success.

Jayawardena et al. (2013): The analyzed the challenges faced by Canadian hotels. It also suggested remedies successful hotel operations in Canada. The paper focused on important information about hotel operations and the challenges faced by hoteliers. The researcher in this study has proposed various training sessions for the employees.

Tutenges, Bøggkjær, Witte and Hesse (2013): This study was based on bartenders themselves are affected by the environments in which they work, especially with regard to their exposure to violence, pressure to drink and stress. The results mentioned that most of them reorted drinking while on duty, use of drugs at work. Verbal assaults and threats were also common and are associated with higher levels of stress.

Severt, DePietro and Herrera (2010): The purpose of this case study based on restaurants in Aruba was to explore the use of automated inventory management systems (IMS) in Food & Beverage Operations. The information was gathered through a questionnaire on approaches used by the restaurants and the reasons and perceptions of the managers for using or not using automated systems in their facilities. The findings of the study indicated that the use of an automated IMS in restaurants is quite limited may be due to budgetary constraints and service support.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify various challenges faced by bartenders during bar operations.
- To understand various strategies followed by bartenders to overcome the challenges during bar operations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To carry out this research study, challenges faced by the bartenders were studied. The questionnaire was circulated amongst bartenders working with various food & beverage outlets. The questionnaire was designed specifically to fulfil the set objectives of the study.

Data Collection

The methodology adopted for this paper is based on actual sample size of people / employees from various bars from various parts of country.

Primary Data: The primary data was collected through online questionnaire survey disseminated by general social networks. The research involved participation from 39 bartenders from various states of India as in pandemic some bars were nonoperational the sample size was 39 bartenders and the survey was done online basis. The survey was addressed by bartenders who were active on social network and are available in bars during pandemic crisis. The questionnaire was based on five-point likert scale where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree.

Secondary Data: The secondary data was collected from published and unpublished literature on challenges faced by bartenders and their perception on the same. Some journals, newspapers, research publications and magazines were also referred for data collection.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected was analyzed using basic and advanced analytical tools. This also includes the detailed analysis of the data which was conducted with the purpose of attaining the research objectives. Mentioned below is the

analysis which is presented graphically and in tabulated form for better interpretation. The Interpretation of the collected data was done by drawing inferences from the collected facts after the analysis of the study.

OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION

From the respondents, the following is been observed about the perception of bartenders about challenges and useful methods of beverage controls:

Data Analysis on Perception of Bartenders About Various Challenges Faced during Bar Operations:

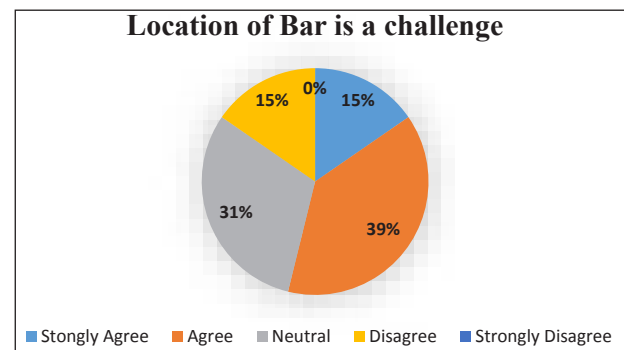


Fig. 1: The Pie Chart Shows that the Bartenders have Found Location as Challenge and to this 15% Strongly Agree, 39% Agree, 31% are Neutral and 15% Disagree with this.

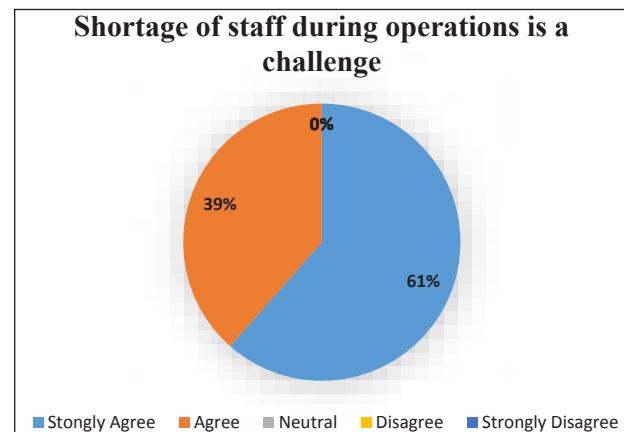


Fig. 2: The Pie Chart Shows that the Bartenders have Found Shortage of Staff as Challenge and to this Majority of 61% Strongly Agree, 39% Agree

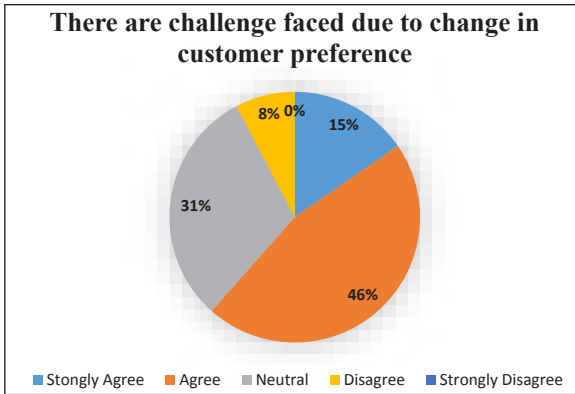


Fig. 3: The Pie Chart Shows that the Bartenders have Found It Challenging that Customer Often Change Their Preference after Ordering the Beverage. About 46% of the Respondents Agree with this Fact during Bar Operations

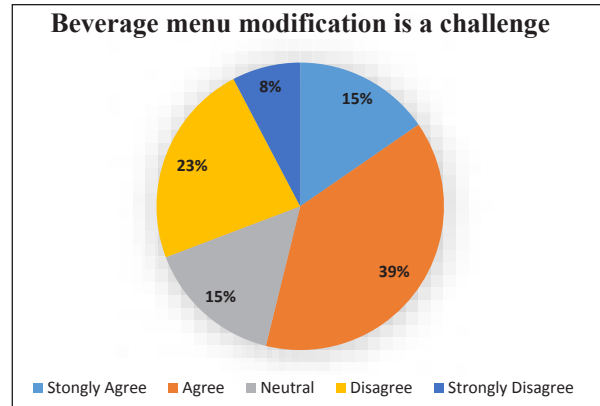


Fig. 6: The Pie Chart Shows that Perishable Products are at Times a Challenge for the Bartenders. About 38% of the Respondents Agree to this Fact

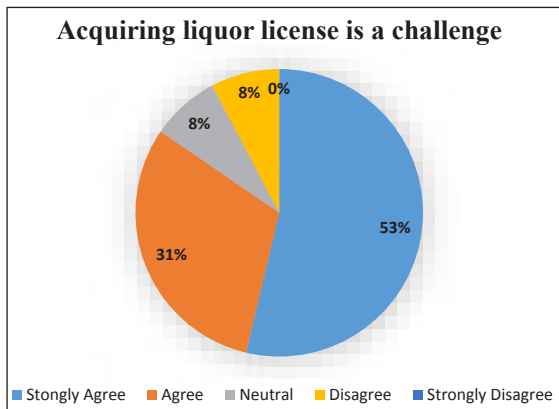


Fig. 4: The Pie Chart Shows that the Bartenders have Found Procuring Liquor License as Challenge and to this Majority of 53.6% Strongly Agree, 31% Agree, 8% are Neutral and 8% have Disagree

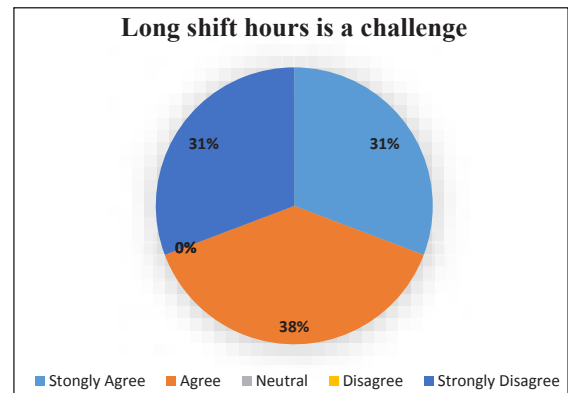


Fig. 7: The Pie Chart Shows that Long Shift Hours as a Challenge. About 38% Agree, 31% Strongly Agree, 31% Strongly Disagree

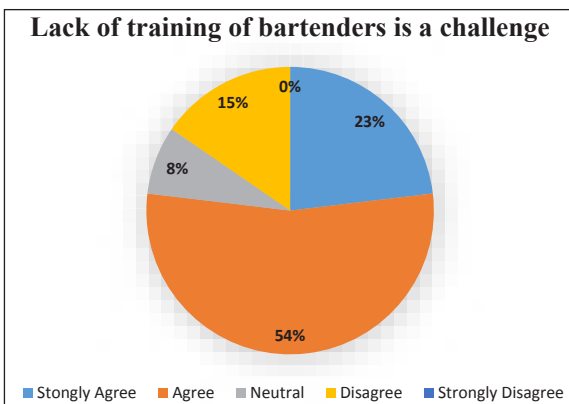


Fig. 5: The Pie Chart Shows that Lack of Training of Bartenders as Challenge and to this Majority of 54% Agree, 23% Strongly Agree, 15% Disagree, and 8% are Neutral

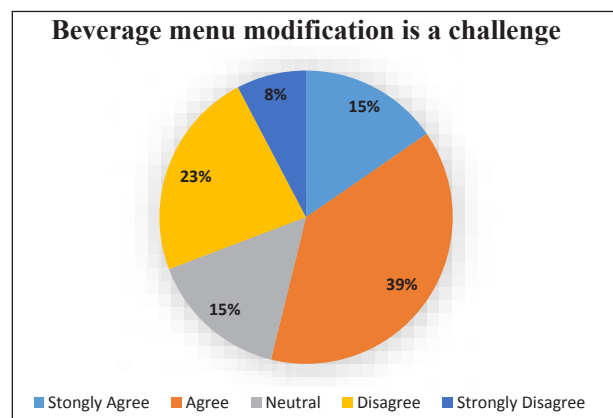


Fig. 8: The Pie Chart Shows that Beverage Menu Modification is a Challenge during Bar Operations. 15% Strongly Agree, 39% Agree, 15% are Neutral, 23% Disagree and 8% Strongly Disagree

Data Analysis on Measures taken to Control the Wastage of Beverages



Fig. 9: The Pie Chart Shows the Percentage of Bartenders Agree that Efficient Training of Bartenders is Best Idea to Control the Beverage Wastage in Bars. To this 54% Strongly Agree and 46% Agree

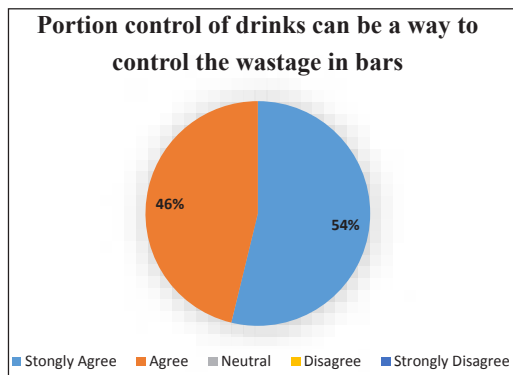


Fig. 10: The Pie Chart Shows that 54 % of Respondents Strongly Agree and 46 % Agree that Portion Control of Drinks can be Way to Control Wastage in Bars

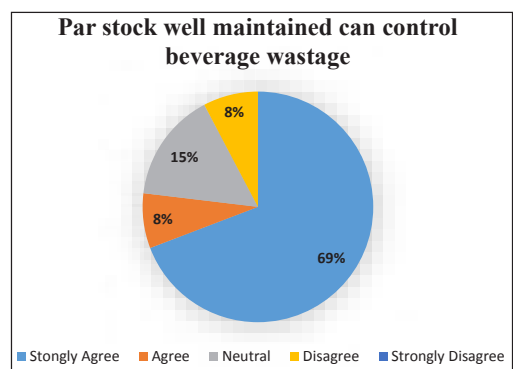


Fig. 11: The Pie Chart Maximum Respondents, about 69% Strongly Agree that Par Stock Well Maintained can Control Beverage Wastage. However, 8% Agree, 15% are Neutral 8% Disagree to this Control Method

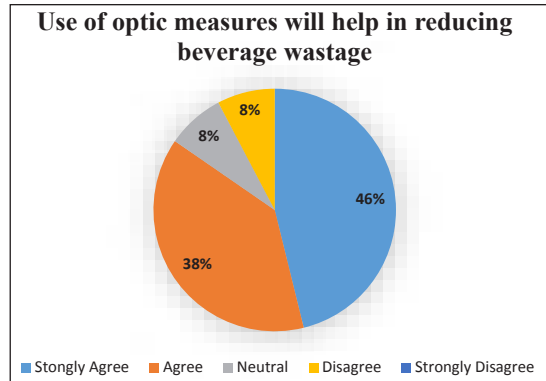


Fig. 12: The Pie Chart Shows that, 46% Respondents Strongly Agree, 38% Agree that Use of Optic Measures will Help in Reducing Beverage Wastage

FINDINGS

- The study helped in understanding the main challenges faced by bartenders during bar operations. As per the finding it is observed that main challenge is the shortage of staff in outlets and acquiring liquor license. These are considered most prominent difficult areas by bartenders. Also, to add to these are some other challenging issues like lack of staff training and long shift hours for staff.
- To overcome the above-mentioned challenges, the bartenders have identified training as one of the best ideas and maintaining proper par stock levels to control on the wastages during the bar operations for its effective functioning. Training of bartenders is found to be very important aspect as per the findings.

CONCLUSION

During bar operations, various challenges are foreseen by bartenders in day to day working. It is required to address the challenges and work on the best practice so that there is more efficiency in the work area.

Hence it is concluded on basis of findings from, “The Study of the challenges faced by bartenders and their perception towards beverage wastage controls in bar operations”, that majority of staff are towards the opinion that shortage of staff is a challenge in bars and best way to control beverage is to train the bartenders. Also, the proper training of bartenders will somewhere help in

better utilization of staff, and reduce on inefficient work habits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- On basis of the research study, it can be recommended that the management of the Bar can hire more staff so that there are proper operations and also train their bartenders so that they can control beverage wastage and other issues.
- It is recommended to provide training which is on the job so that the bartenders can learn while they are working.
- Training should be a continuously done for the staff as the trends keep changing and hotel industry is extremely dynamic in nature.

REFERENCES

- Nain, A. (2018). A study on major challenges faced by hotel industry globally. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, 6(1), 561-571.
- Bernard, D., Lockwood, A., & Stone, S. (2005). *Food and beverage management* (3rd ed.). Copyright Year 1998, Butterworth – Heinemann.
- Buvik, K., & Scheffels, J. (2019). On both sides of the bar. Bartenders' accounts of work-related drinking. *Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy*, 27, 1-8.
- Jayawardena, C., Lawlor, F., Grieco, J. C., & Savard, M. (2013). Challenges and innovations in hotel operations in Canada. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 5(2), 177-189.
- Dadić, L., Maškarin Ribarić, H., & Vlahov, B. (2020). Inventory management in bars and restaurants – Employees' attitudes. *Tourism & Hospitality Industry 07, University of Rijeka, Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management* (pp. 79-91).
- Bradley, D. M., Elenis, T., & Hoyer, G. (2017, July). Human capital challenges in the food and beverage service industry of Canada: Finding innovative solutions. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 9(1). doi:10.1108/WHATT-04-2017-0017
- Lee, S., Lee, K.-S., Chua, B.-L., & Han, H. (2019). Hotel restaurants' challenges and critical success factors in Klang Valley, Malaysia: The inseparable roles of support centers and revenue streams. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 20, 16-43.
- Jayawardena, C. (2017). The hospitality and tourism industry in Canada: Innovative solutions for the future. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 9(4).
- Adeola, O., & Ezenwafor, K. (2016, April). The hospitality business in Nigeria: Issues, challenges and opportunities. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 8(2), 182-194.
- Tutenges, S., Bøgkjær, T., Witte, M., & Hesse, M. (2013). Drunken environments: A survey of bartenders working in pubs, bars and nightclubs. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*.
<http://rizvihmct.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Semester-VI-food-and-beverage.pdf>
<https://www.glimpsecorp.com/bar-operations-management>
<https://www.pearsonhighered.com/assets/samplechapter/0/1/3/2/0132725738.pdf>
<https://hospitalitynu.blogspot.com/2012/07/beverage-purchase-control.html>
<https://www.indifi.com/blog/5-challenges-faced-by-indian-restaurateurs>
<https://www.indifi.com/blog/5-challenges-faced-by-indian-restaurateurs/>