

Theoretical Framework

Three theories and concepts serve as the basis for this study: (1) Jake Hall's elements of drag performance; (2) Henry Lefebvre's production of space theory; and (3) Judith Butler's gender performativity theory.

1. *Elements of Drag Performance*

Apart from talking about drag's historical roots in theater and performance and its representation in current popular culture and activism, Jake Hall's book *"The Art of Drag"* also outlines different elements that were ingrained in drag as a cultural and artistic phenomena, all of which were evident in the numerous drag artists he highlighted in his book. These drag elements were the following:

- a. **Makeup:** A crucial element of drag that is utilized as a tool for transformation and self-expression. This involves makeup methods like highlighting, contouring, and bold color selections that help to reshape face features to create dramatic results that fit the performer's intended identity.
- b. **Clothing:** In addition to makeup, one of the most important aspects of drag performances is the clothing that the drag performers wear, whether it's glamorous or campy, as it reflects the identity and purpose of their drag persona. These drag artists' unique drag style was also influenced by their selected clothing and fashion.
- c. **Music and Lip-Syncing:** These were the components that drag performers employed to transform their performance into a visual spectacle by exaggerating their body movements, facial expressions, and gestures. They apply songs in

their performances so drag artists can effectively tell stories, show emotion, and provide entertainment.

- d. **Persona and Style:** This component is an expansion of the drag performer's identity, inventiveness, and artistic expression, which their own drag derives from a variety of sources such as history, popular culture, or other experiences of cultural icons they can use as a reference for their performance.

2. Production of Space Theory

Henry Lefebvre's Space Production suggests that social relationships and power dynamics create space rather than merely a passive environment for social interaction. He claims that space, which is closely linked to political, economic, and cultural social institutions, is influenced by human behaviour, institutions, and ideologies. Lefebvre describes three dimensions of space: (a) *perceived space*, referred to as the tangible space we regularly engage with, (b) *conceived space*, which is planned and represented through systems like maps and urban planning, and (c) *lived space*, where people's subjective and emotional experiences are influenced by their goals, challenges, and lived experiences.

Through those three aspects, it can serve as a framework for evaluating how drag bars function as the primary venue for drag performances. The "*perceived space*" refers to the bar's actual, architectural arrangement, which includes the type of stage, lighting, mood, and theme. The "*conceived space*" refers to how the space is ideologically defined (as a site of subversion, community, or spectacle); while the "*lived space*" outlines how drag clubs are used as a venue with a social purpose for drag performers, loaded with meaning and lived experiences.

3. Gender Performativity Theory

Based on Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity, language, actions, and behaviors by which a person gets conditioned in society and culture render gender a performative act. This view argues that gender is an artifact to be performed again and again rather than a property, which the argument negates against rigid male-female division and creates room for expressing gender outside the binary. Butler considers an inclusive vision of gender outside the conventional way of looking into it. Related to that were the drag shows which are venues for disruptively generating gender identification and destabilized gender conventions.

Drag performers are dramatizing the performative aspect of gender as per the Butler principle; they dramatize it with their exaggerated displays of gender. The notion of social construction hence demonstrates the artificiality of such standards for gender. It demonstrates the protest against what is viewed as institutionally defined genders by providing a much more elastic concept with respect to gender identity. Judith Butler's idea of performativity will give an understanding of the modes by which drag performances question, disturb, and challenge social and political institutions that govern gender. Art and activism in one, for through these performances the idea of how gender is socially created is exposed, and new spaces for gender expression and emancipation are opened.

Conceptual Framework

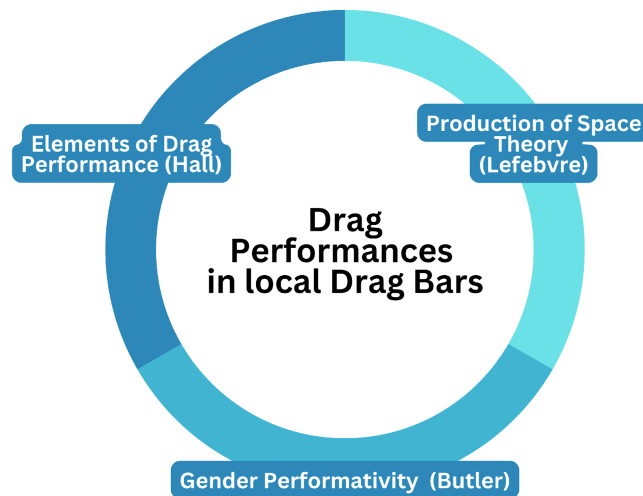


Fig 1. Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework demonstrates that drag performances at drag clubs are at the heart of this research. It is surrounded by the three most significant ideas and concepts, allowing it to be studied in accordance with the thesis' challenges and objectives. First, the application of *elements in drag performances* proposed by Hall that includes makeup, clothing, music, lip-syncing, and persona and style. Second, Lefebvre's *production of space theory*, which includes discussions of perceived space, conceived space, and lived space, is used to observe the selected drag bars inside the study. The last one is Butler's *gender performativity theory*, which demonstrates how drag performances in drag clubs serve as a space for social political expression.

Methodology

This study used a qualitative technique, particularly an interpretive phenomenological analysis that focuses on interpreting the 'lived experiences' of research participants (Alase, 2017), who in this case were drag artists performing at local drag bars.

A. Data Gathering Tools

In order to gather data regarding this, the researcher will directly attend three (3) drag shows from different local drag bars between January and March 2025. These bars are Drag in the South in Las Piñas, Hoesik in Makati, and Rampa Drag Club in Quezon City. Each of these venues was selected as they actively featured local Filipino drag performers.

Employing passive participant observation, the researcher will observe and capture all parts of drag artists' performances at selected local drag bars without conversing or interacting with them in any way. Accompanied by field notes, which will be used as a documentation tool to record all primary data gathered from the drag performances from the three local drag clubs chosen for the study.

To support the primary sources collected from observation and field notes, secondary resources from books or online scholar platforms such as Jstor, Springer, and Sage Journals, which are rich in articles relevant to this subject, will be used.

B. Data Analysis

Following the documentation of all the information gathered through field notes and observation, the obtained data will go through a number of processes.

The first part of an assessment will involve applying Jake Hall's various *drag performance elements*, which include makeup, attire, music, lip sync, and persona and style. The study's goals 1 and 2 are in line with this stage.

In accordance with the third study's objectives, the local drag bars will next be evaluated as a primary location for drag performances using Henry Lefebvre's *production of space theory*, specifically his discussion of perceived space, conceived space, and lived space.

Lastly, the analysis will also draw on Judith Butler's *gender performativity theory* to explain how drag shows in drag bars function as a forum for social and political expression. This aligns with the fourth goal of the research.

References

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