PhD Research | School of Design | The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

PhD Researcher:
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Specialization / Interests:
Inclusive Design

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PhD Title:
Ageing at Home: An exploration of the meaning of ‘home’ for Care Design.

Keywords:
Home, care, ageing, design.

Research Abstract:
Ying’s PhD research focuses on exploring the meaning of “home” for care, aiming to improve care quality particularly for the older population by gaining an understanding of how this segment of society relates to the ideas and practices of “home” and “care.” To date, she has conducted an extensive literature review and has developed a preliminary conceptual model of “home” for her PhD dissertation. She has analyzed eight case studies of care homes in the Western world, and has visited half a dozen care homes in Shanghai. The comparison has revealed some interesting issues, indicating that there is a great difference between Eastern and Western cultures in their concepts and practices of care. Her residency in Hong Kong, made possible by the Joint PhD programme between Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Tongji University is an ideal opportunity to study practices of care influenced by both Western and Eastern cultures.

Research Methodology:
The popular design research methodology – DRM (Blessing & Chakrabarti, 2009) is used. This study will follow the four research stages of the DRM, i.e. "defining the goal – understanding existing situation – developing support – evaluation". In the process of research, the work will abide ethics requirements.

1) Research Goals:
The goals will be determined through literature review and expert interview.

2) Understanding existing situation:
- To explore the meaning of home based on the review of the literature and to develop a theoretical model.
- To extract key factors of home by field visits in selected RCFs and personal homes. The main methods include observation, ethnographic interview and image sorting.
- To identify means of improvement regarding the “homeyness” of RCFs by running analysis workshops.

3) Developing Support: To develop proposals for improving care from the “home feel” perspective.

4) Evaluation: Co-work with experts and older people by interviews and follow-up workshops to evaluate proposals.

Results / outcomes:
1. It will identify the key care issues from the perspective of home, as well as the criteria for good care.
2. It will develop a theoretic model of home, synthesising the literature of the traditional and the modern, the East and the West.
3. It will explore the power of design for ageing care and discover its potential and limitations.

Key Publications:
